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LONGMANS' ENGLISH CLASSICS

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EDMUND SPENSER

SELECTIONS FROM THE FAERIE QUEENE



Longmans' English Classics

SELECTIONS FROM

SPENSER'S

THE FAERIE QUEENE

EDITED

WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION

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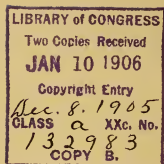
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INTRODUCTION

I. EDMUND SPENSER

EDMUND SPENSER, greatest of the Elizabethan poets except Shakspeare, was the earliest of that astonishing number of men of genius who made Queen Elizabeth's reign famous in literature. During his lifetime England came to a knowledge of her power on the sea, and her opportunities in the new world. In literature, also, a spirit of national pride and enterprise, as well as awakened curiosity, led Englishmen to master the native literature of France and Italy, which in turn had been stimulated by Italy's new knowledge of the classics, and to pour these intellectual conquests into English literature through translations and imitations. The effect was to excite men's imaginations, and to give to books a vitality for the average man such as they have never had before or since. This awakening of interest in human life, and in books as the store-houses of that life, extended throughout Europe, and is known as the Renaissance.

The period of the Renaissance was a transition, during which mediæval thought became modern. In English literature almost all the steps in this change are to be found within the limits of Queen Elizabeth's reign. For this reason, some poets whose lives practically coincided in point of time, differed widely in the character of their writings, according as their genius was in sympathy with the old, vanishing world of thought, or with the newer outlook. We think of

Shakspeare and Bacon as the leaders of this modern Elizabethan thought; the chief representative of the mediæval strain is Spenser. In one sense he was indeed thoroughly a man of his time: no Englishman in those fortunate days had brighter hopes of his country's destiny, or was prouder of its accomplishments and of its great men; and certainly no Englishman ever paid his sovereign such a tribute as Spenser did in the 'Faerie Queene.' But he had a genius for the past. He loved old books, old legends, and, most of all, the old standards of chivalry, in comparison with which the knighthood of his own time could not but seem degenerate. Just as Sir Walter Scott filled his mind with the past of Scotland, and made it live again in his romances, so Spenser recovered in himself the much larger past of European culture, and preserved it for us in the 'Faerie Queene.' This is his significance, and we should begin any study of him with this in mind.

Spenser was born in London, probably in 1552. His father was a cloth-maker; of his mother we know only that her name was Elizabeth. As a boy Spenser was sent to the merchant tailors' school, which had recently been founded by his father's guild. Here he received a scholarship from a bequest made by Robert Nowell, a distant connection of the Spenser family. The boy was a good student from the first, and he was always fortunate in his teachers. Under the care of the headmaster, Richard Mulcaster, a remarkable educator, he progressed rapidly in that wide reading and scholarly accomplishment which places him with Milton and Gray, as the most learned of English poets. Before he left the school he made some translations from French and Italian poetry, and the verses were published in London.

In May, 1569, he entered Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, the first of that university's long line of poets, destined to include Milton, Dryden, Gray, Byron, Wordsworth, and Tennyson. Though he was still poor and continued to benefit by the Nowell legacy, he made his way, as he had done in school, by his ability as a student and his evident poetic genius, and by the charm of his character. He always attracted noble men and kept their friendship. Of his college friends two are remembered with him — Gabriel Harvey, a Fellow, and Edward Kirke, a younger student.

Spenser stayed at the university seven years, graduating M.A. in 1576. He was in poor health at the time, and spent the following year with some relatives in Lancashire. This visit is remembered for his falling in love with Rosalind, the mysterious lady whom he celebrated later in the 'Shepherd's Calendar' and in others of his poems, connecting his name with hers much as Sidney connected his with Stella's. At the end of the year, disappointed in love, he went to London to seek his fortune. Gabriel Harvey gave him a letter to the Earl of Leicester, which proved a successful introduction, and Spenser at once began his career as secretary to Elizabeth's favorite.

Under Leicester's roof Spenser soon made the acquaintance of the brilliant young men of the court, especially of Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Edward Dyer, whose friendship for each other and for Fulke Greville is famous. They recognized his genius, and he became their comrade in literary interests. He also corresponded with Harvey, who had a theory of improving English poetry by discarding accent and rhyme, and establishing rules of quantity, such as govern Latin or Greek prosody. The young poets experimented with

this pedantic theory, and Spenser showed his true instinct as an English poet by being one of the first to give it up. At this time he began his great poem, the 'Faerie Queene,' and in 1579 he published his first book, the 'Shepherd's Calendar.'

This is a series of twelve poems, one for each month in which country people discuss simple themes, such as belong to the shepherd's life. Such poems are called pastorals, and Spenser had taken for his models the pastorals of Theocritus and Virgil, and of their Italian and French imitators. He follows Virgil and these later writers also in making his pastorals not so much pictures of real life, as allegories; his shepherds are himself and his friends in disguise, and their simple talk veils a discussion of personal and public topics such as would interest all thoughtful Englishmen of the time. Each of the twelve poems was followed by a scholarly commentary, written by Edward Kirke, explaining the allegory and the allusions, and pointing out the beauty of the poetry with the greatest enthusiasm. We can see at once how typical of the Renaissance the book was, in its learning and in its imitation of French and Italian and classical writers. The allegorical method also belonged to the age and was characteristic of Spenser; we shall study it at length in the 'Faerie Queene.'

Spenser was hailed at once as the greatest English poet since Chaucer, and with his literary success came an appointment as secretary to the Lord Deputy of Ireland. He took up his new work in 1580, hoping that with advancement he might return permanently to England and the court. But Ireland was to be for him a land of exile until his death. He began his official tasks bravely, however, and devoted his leisure

to the 'Faerie Queene.' In 1588 he was promoted to be clerk of the council of Munster, and the castle of Kilcolman, near Cork, was given him for a residence. Here he received a visit from Sir Walter Raleigh, who listened to parts of the 'Faerie Queene,' and persuaded him to take the first three books to London and publish them. The poem appeared in 1590, and won much speedier recognition than even such a masterpiece could hope for. The nobility of its content, its richness of incident and color, and the wonderful music of its verse, were just what the Renaissance had taught cultured Englishmen to feel the lack of in their poetry, and the book was hailed as the long-wished-for English rival of what the preceding centuries had brought forth in other lands.

But all the praise could not keep the poet from his exile. The Queen gave him a pension of fifty pounds, too little to support him in London, and he returned to Ireland, to find what comfort he could in his great fame, and in the composition of the next three books of the 'Faerie Queene.' In 1595 he married Elizabeth Boyle, for whom he wrote the 'Amoretti,' a series of sonnets, and the 'Epithalamion,' one of the noblest of love poems. Shortly after his marriage he returned to London to publish the second instalment of the 'Faerie Queene.' It was on this visit that he wrote his beautiful 'Prothalamion,' an allegorical poem in honor of the wedding of the Earl of Worcester's daughters.

In 1597 he returned to Ireland for the last time. He found the country in a state of insurrection, and in 1598 he was appointed sheriff of Cork, a dangerous post that made him a marked man. In August of that year Tyrone defeated the English troops at Black-

water, and the Irish immediately rose in the south. Spenser was surprised in his castle and barely escaped with his family to Cork. The castle was burned to the ground, and it was reported at the time, probably incorrectly, that one of his children perished in it. Spenser was sent to England with government despatches. Arriving there worn out and despondent, he fell ill and died, January 16, 1599. A story long persisted that he died in great want, and that when the Earl of Essex sent him some money at the last moment, the poet returned it, saying that he had no time to spend it. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, with great ceremony, near Chaucer.

II. THE FAERIE QUEENE

SPENSER never completed the 'Faerie Queene.' As we have it now, there are but six whole books and two cantos of a seventh. With nothing more to guide us, it would be very hard to understand the plan of the complicated story as a whole. But Spenser himself, fortunately foreseeing this difficulty, prefixed to the first books an explanation, in the form of the letter to Sir Walter Raleigh.¹ From this we learn the design of the whole poem, and the particular meaning of the completed portion.

The "end" or purpose of the 'Faerie Queene,' Spenser says, is "to fashion a gentleman," or, as we should say, to portray the building of character. For several centuries European literature, in one way or another, had been dealing with the problem of what constituted a gentleman, but always thinking of the gentleman in his social aspect. The Provençal Courts of Love,

¹See page 169.

in which rules were prescribed and enforced for the over's conduct, represent an early stage in this fashion; Baldassare Castiglione's 'Cortegiano,' 1518, represents the fashion as it appealed to Sir Philip Sidney, and was realized in his life, and became the subject of Spenser's poem. But the Reformation as well as the Renaissance had moulded the poet's nature, so that he treated his theme from the spiritual rather than the social standpoint; the fashioning of a gentleman in the 'Faerie Queene' is a question, not merely of manners, but of the state of the soul as well.

Such a subject, as Spenser well knew, was naturally abstract and philosophical, with a tendency to appeal to the intellect, instead of stirring the emotions, as poetry should do, through images and incidents. In order to secure this poetical interest, Spenser determined to teach the fashioning of a gentleman through a story. And in order to tell a story, he had to invent both characters and action. For the characters, he took the twelve chief virtues a gentleman should have, and treated them as persons; he also personified the corresponding vices, putting into concrete images, of monsters or even landscape and weather, each temptation that each virtue must overcome before it is perfect. Thus the Red Cross knight, representing Holiness, must overcome Error, Archimago, Duessa, Despair, and the Dragon, before his own character of holiness is achieved. Guyon, the knight of Temperance, overcomes his peculiar temptations in the same way.

Thus the virtues and vices of the soul become the characters of the 'Faerie Queene.' For the plot, Spenser imagined that the Queen of Fairyland held a feast, lasting twelve days. On each day she sent one of her knights (representing a virtue) on a quest, to

rescue some subject in distress. The adventure of each knight was to be told in one book, so that the complete poem would tell the adventures of the twelve knights, who together would therefore represent all the aspects of the soul's achievement of virtue. Besides this composite picture of the soul, Spenser gives us one single example of the perfection of all the virtues, the gentleman complete, in Prince Arthur. When the presiding knight of each book is at his moment of greatest weakness, Arthur enters the story, rescues the knight, and makes the success of his quest possible. In the religious sense he represents Heavenly Grace; from the artistic standpoint he serves as a measure of the complete soul, by his mere presence reminding us that the other knights, whom he assists, are but single virtues, not the whole soul.

The 'Faerie Queene,' therefore, is an allegory — that is, the poet tells us one story, complete and interesting of itself, and means that we shall understand a hidden meaning, another story, equally complete and interesting. The Parables in the Bible, and Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress,' are, with Spenser's poem, the great allegories of our literature. In the allegory the story told is as it were an image or metaphor of the one understood; the sowing of the seed in the parable is recognized at once as a fit image of teaching, sowing the seed of truth in men's hearts; in the 'Pilgrim's Progress' the image of a journey is an old and familiar way to express human life. So Spenser, wishing to find a suitable image of man's conquest of sin, the fashioning of a gentleman, chose the noble allegory of warfare. The image was not new. St. Paul used it of the Christian life, having in mind the Roman soldier and his arms. Spenser adopted St. Paul's

metaphor, but naturally followed the mediæval ideal of warfare — chivalry, the knightly quest. So in the *Faerie Queene* the story told is of the twelve knights who go forth to rescue fellowmen in distress; the story understood is of the soul's conquest of sin.

From time to time Spenser adds to his poem what we might call a second allegory; in some of the personages and incidents he shadows certain of his friends and recounts contemporary events. Thus Gloriana is Queen Elizabeth, St. George is Leicester, Duessa is Mary Queen of Scots, and Arthegal is Lord Grey. This portrayal of contemporaries was a kind of compliment to the poets' friends, customary in mediæval times in other branches of art as well as in poetry. In Italian religious painting especially the insertion of real portraits was familiar. The interest of the *'Faerie Queene'* as a work of art should not be affected in any way by this incidental portraiture.

On a first reading, or even a second or third, the wonderful story of the poem, the surprising adventures of knights and ladies, may give an impression of disorder, as if Spenser had imagined the events by chance, without consequence or congruity. It is, however, only the story told that gives this impression; the story understood, which to Spenser was the more important, is perfectly logical and clear. In this hidden narrative of the soul's battle with sin, the poet portrays states of mind rather than actions, and in these states of mind we must find the poem's true sequence. We find here also Spenser's most faithful and universal rendering of life; in the story understood he pictures accurately all possible states of the human mind, just as Shakspeare portrays all human actions. But when Spenser came to reflect these inner expe-

riences in the actual story told, he chose his images, his allegorical metaphors, from every department of literature and life, selecting each image for its individual fitness, without regard to the metaphors that followed or went before. This eclecticism, resulting in confusion, was a Renaissance characteristic, and appears again in Spenser's remarkable choice of diction. But the confusion is only in the poet's expression, in the allegorical metaphors or the actual language; Ruskin's analysis of Book I, appended to his 'Stones of Venice,' shows how firm and coherent is the material of the poem. It is because of this contrast, however, between the simple subject of the allegory and its complicated expression, that Spenser requires, for full appreciation, so much sympathy, and makes his strongest appeal to imaginative readers.

Spenser's choice of chivalry as the outward metaphor of his allegory was almost inevitable. As the central institution, then perceptibly passing away, of society in the middle ages, chivalry appealed strongly to Spenser's love of the past. Recently at Elizabeth's court the young knights who were his friends had revived for the last time some of the pageantry of chivalry, and a few of them, notably Sidney, were living out its ideals in a way to fire the imagination of a poet. But even more important with Spenser was the influence of books. For a hundred years the great Italian poems had been epics of chivalry, the romances in Spain and France and England had been largely stories of the knightly quest, and the lyric poetry in France and Italy had been based on the ideals of knighthood; the race had expressed itself in terms of chivalry, and Spenser simply followed that literary method, using the language that was natural to him.

But the enfeebled institution of chivalry is revitalized in the 'Faerie Queene' by Spenser's noble conception of spiritual warfare as a condition of the progress of the soul; more than the social ideals of knighthood, this animates his poem.

Spenser not only draws upon the ideas of chivalry, but he also takes into his own work practically all the familiar episodes and situations of chivalric literature, using them as a means of expression. He is heavily indebted in this respect to Chaucer, his great master in English poetry, and still more to Ariosto and Tasso. To the modern understanding of originality in creative work, this indebtedness seems sheer plagiarism. The mediæval mind, however, saw nothing to criticise in Spenser's methods, which were exactly the methods that Chaucer, Ariosto, and Tasso themselves employed. Mediæval art and literature were stereotyped, and scenes and episodes were treated as language, — mere words, — free to any poet who cared to express himself through them. What the poet expressed, constituted his originality; Spenser never says the same thing as Tasso, nor Tasso the same thing as Ariosto, though many descriptions and episodes are common to all three. One illustration of this mediæval attitude survives among us in architecture. The architect who designs a Gothic church is never accused of plagiarism; on the contrary, we demand of him that he follow the recognized models of that type of building. His originality is in the proportions, in the graceful effect of the whole, and here he leaves the mark of his personality. So with the episodes in Spenser — the talking tree, the wandering island, the Bower of Bliss; they are, as it were, the accepted language of epic poetry. The important thing is that Spenser, using

them as means of expression, says something new and beautiful.

The language in which the 'Faerie Queene' is written, will attract the student's attention at once. There never was anything quite like it, outside of Spenser's poem. Like the episodes in the story, it illustrates the eclecticism, the wide reading, the lack of feeling for congruity, that are typical of the Renaissance poet. Writing a story of chivalry as it was in the past, and wishing to give his poem a certain perspective, Spenser imitated the language that Chaucer used, Middle English.¹ His imitation is extremely free, however; many of Chaucer's word-forms he seems not to have understood, and very probably it mattered nothing to him whether he understood them or not; he preferred to re-build the language for his own use. Always interested in the past, he was governed in the choice of words by their age, first of all, and then by their imaginative quality, picturesqueness, and their musical effect. The second and third qualities mark any poet's vocabulary; the first is characteristic of the antiquarian strain in Spenser. These principles apply to his choice of words in general. In the matter of rhyming he takes more than liberty with the language; not only does he invent new declensions and verb-forms and revive obsolete meanings, for the sake of the rhyme, but he even gives purely arbitrary meanings to familiar words, with the greatest violence to their connotations.²

Spenser's choice of words for their musical quality has just been noticed. No other English poem has such sweetness as the 'Faerie Queene,' nor any other poet

¹ See the quotation from Chaucer, p. 152.

² See note on II, xii, 75, p. 166.

such sustained power of song as Spenser. His music is languid in manner, and gives at first an impression of luxuriousness and effeminacy, that hardly does justice to the greatness of his nature. The Notes will call attention to passages strikingly concise and spirited, but even in such lines the charm of the music is still felt.

Much of this music is obtained from the stanza in which the poem is written, — Spenser's own invention, and for that reason known as the Spenserian stanza. It contains nine lines, the first line rhyming with the third, the second rhyming with the fourth, fifth, and seventh, and the sixth rhyming with the eighth and ninth. The rhyme-scheme may therefore be denoted by *a b a b b c b c c*. The first eight lines are of the same length, having five stresses; the ninth line is longer than the others, and has six stresses. In this last line lies the peculiarity of the stanza. The extra stress has the effect of retarding the music without breaking it, so that the ear is rested in a long continuous passage. On the other hand, at the end of a single stanza or an episode or a canto, the last line is capable of superb final cadences; the musical weight of the line seems sufficient climax for all that goes before. It should be noticed also that the cesura, or break, in the last line is extremely free; Spenser lets it fall anywhere, near the beginning or the end or the middle; and the effect is of infinite variety. No two stanzas in this long poem make quite the same musical impression. The final lines of the first four stanzas in the poem illustrate this variety:

‘As one for knightly giusts and fierce encounters fitt.’

‘Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.’

‘Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and stearne.’

‘And by her, in a line, a milkewhite lambe she lad.’

Spenser's spelling is practically phonetic. The verses should be read as they are spelled, and the rhythm will show what syllables, silent in modern English, must be pronounced. Final -es in plurals and possessives should be sounded, as should final -ed. Some words, like 'towards,' receive the full value of both syllables, as the demands of the scansion will show. In spelling, as in meaning, the rhymes are a law unto themselves; the sound of the word must be taken from the other rhymes, just as the meaning in such cases must often be found in the context.

III. HELPS TO TEACHERS

THE great edition of Spenser's works is Grosart's (privately printed), in nine volumes. The life of Spenser in the first volume is very complete, and the appended essays by various critics should be exceedingly helpful to mature students. Among these essays should be noticed especially Aubrey De Vere's on the Characteristics of Spenser's Poetry (reprinted in 'Essays, Chiefly on Poetry,' Vol. I, Macmillan). The best one-volume edition of the complete works is the Morris-Hale edition (Macmillan). An excellent one-volume edition of the complete 'Faerie Queene' is W. P. Trent's (Crowell).

The standard biography of Spenser is that by Dean Church, in the English Men of Letters series. Of the innumerable essays that the teacher or student might consult, the most suggestive are Sidney Lee's, in 'Great Englishmen of the Sixteenth Century' (Scribner's), — chiefly biographical in its interest; Ruskin's analysis of the allegory of the first book, appended to 'Stones of Venice,' — valuable as showing the logical

structure of the story; G. E. Woodberry's essay in 'The Torch' (McClure), — a remarkably sympathetic analysis of the significance of the 'Faerie Queene' and its position in world literature; Lowell's essay on Spenser in 'Among My Books,' Series II; and the earlier chapters of J. S. Harrison's 'Platonism in English Poetry of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries' (Macmillan), — admirable expositions of the philosophical basis of the first books of the 'Faerie Queene.'

In approaching Spenser's great allegory, the student may easily be misled or discouraged by ill-advised erudition and commentary. Thoughtful as the poem is — one of the most thoughtful and scholarly in any language — its first appeal is to the imagination, and nothing should be allowed to interfere with this appeal. The student should *see* the adventures, and sympathize with the misfortunes and victories of the characters; after that it will be time enough to show what the poem means. The poem should be read through first for the story, then for the allegory, to understand the sequence of the states of mind, and then for the study of characters, scenes, color-effects, and the music of the verse.

On many other sides the study of the poem can be enriched. Some attention might be paid to individual words, especially the old ones, in order to stimulate the student's imagination and to vitalize the language for him. And the more historical background the student has for the poem, the better, since it is so much a poem of the past. Here, again, however, the approach should be imaginative. For a picture of Elizabethan England, Scott's 'Kenilworth' might be read, and for the beginning of the Renaissance, Charles Reade's 'Cloister and the Hearth.' Of the numerous

essays on the Renaissance, the first chapter in Sidney Lee's 'Great Englishmen of the Sixteenth Century' is the most useful. For different views of chivalry, Tennyson, Mallory, and Froissart provide convenient examples, and an excellent essay on the institution of chivalry is that prefixed to Sir Edward Strachey's edition of the 'Morte D'Arthur' (Macmillan).

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

SPENSER'S LIFE.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE AND HISTORY.
<p>1552. Spenser born in London.</p>	<p>1551. Sir Walter Raleigh born. English Prayer Book revised by Cranmer.</p> <p>1553. Edward VI died. Coronation of Lady Jane Grey. Accession of Mary.</p> <p>1554. Sir Philip Sidney and John Lyly born.</p> <p>1555. Protestants persecuted.</p> <p>1556. Cranmer and Loyola died.</p> <p>1558. Thomas Lodge and George Peele born. England loses Calais. Death of Mary. Accession of Elizabeth.</p> <p>1560. Robert Greene born. The Geneva Bible.</p> <p>1561. Francis Bacon born.</p> <p>1563. Michael Drayton born. The Thirty-nine articles.</p> <p>1564. Shakespere, Marlowe, and Galileo born. Michael Angelo and Calvin died.</p>
<p>1569. Spenser enters Pembroke Hall, Cambridge.</p>	
<p>1576. Spenser, M.A.</p>	<p>1571. Elizabeth deposed by the Pope. Keppler born.</p> <p>1572. St. Bartholomew's massacre.</p> <p>1573. Bacon enters Trinity College, Cambridge. Gabriel Harvey, M.A., Cambridge. Sidney in Germany and Italy.</p> <p>1575. John Lyly, M.A., Oxford. Tasso's <i>Gerusalemme Liberata</i> completed.</p>
<p>1579. <i>The Shepherdes Calendar</i>. Correspondence with Harvey.</p>	<p>First public theatre in London.</p> <p>Elizabeth's Kenilworth progress.</p> <p>Titian died.</p> <p>Lyly's <i>Euphues</i>. North's translation of Plutarch.</p>

SPENSER'S LIFE.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE AND HISTORY.
1580. Secretary to the Lord Deputy of Ireland.	Lodge's <i>Defense of Plays</i> . Sir Francis Drake sails round the world. Montaigne's <i>Essais</i> .
1588. Clerk of the Council of Munster.	1583. Sir Humphrey Gilbert sails to Newfoundland. Sidney knighted. Galileo discovers the principle of the pendulum.
1590. The <i>Faerie Queene</i> , i-iii.	1584. Bacon enters Parliament. Raleigh colonizes Virginia.
1591. Pension from the Queen. <i>Daphnida</i> ; <i>Complaints</i> .	1586. Shakspeare leaves Stratford for London. Sidney died.
1594. Spenser marries Elizabeth Boyle.	1587. Marlowe's <i>Tamburlaine</i> . Mary Queen of Scots executed. Spanish Armada defeated.
1595. <i>Colin Clouts Come Home again</i> ; <i>Amoretti</i> ; <i>Epithalamion</i> .	Marlowe's <i>Tamburlaine</i> published. Sidney's <i>Arcadia</i> .
1596. <i>View of the State of Ireland</i> ; <i>Faerie Queene</i> , iv-vi; <i>Prothalamion</i> .	Shakspeare's <i>Love's Labour's Lost</i> and <i>Two Gentlemen of Verona</i> . Sidney's <i>Astrophel and Stella</i> .
1598. Sheriff of Cork.	1593. Marlowe died. Marlowe's <i>Edward II</i> published. Shakspeare's <i>Merchant of Venice</i> , <i>King John</i> ; the <i>Sonnets</i> begun. Sidney's <i>Apologie for Poetrie</i> . Shakspeare's <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , <i>All's Well that Ends Well</i> , and <i>Taming of the Shrew</i> . Tasso died.
1599. Spenser died in London.	Sir Francis Drake died. Descartes born.
	Globe Theatre built. Jonson's <i>Every Man in his Humour</i> . Shakspeare's <i>Henry V</i> . Burghley died. <i>The Passionate Pilgrim</i> .

THE FAERIE QUEENE

THE FIRST BOOK

CONTAYNING THE LEGEND OF THE KNIGHT OF THE RED
CROSSE, OR OF HOLINESSE

CANTO I

The Patrone of true Holinesse
Foule Errour doth defeate:
Hypocrisie, him to entrappe,
Doth to his home entreate.

1. A GENTLE Knight was pricking on the plaine,
Ycladd in mightie armes and silver shielde,
Wherein old dints of deepe woundes did remaine,
The cruell markes of many' a bloody felde;
Yet armes till that time did he never wield.
His angry steede did chide his foming bitt,
As much disdayning to the curbe to yield:
Full jolly¹ knight he seemd, and faire did sitt,
As one for knightly giusts² and fierce encounters fitt.
2. And on his brest a bloodie Crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead, as living, ever him ador'd:
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,³
For soveraine hope which in his helpe he had.
Right faithfull true he was in deede and word,
But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad;
Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.⁴

¹ Brave.

² Jousts.

³ Engraved.

⁴ Dreaded.

3. Upon a great adventure he was bond,
 That greatest Gloriana to him gave,
 (That greatest Glorious Queene of Faery lond)
 To winne him worshippe, and her grace to have,
 Which of all earthly thinges he most did crave:
 And ever as he rode his hart did earne¹
 To prove his puissance in battell brave
 Upon his foe, and his new force to learne,
 Upon his foe, a Dragon horrible and stearne.
4. A lovely Ladie rode him faire beside,
 Upon a lowly Asse more white then snow,
 Yet she much whiter; but the same did hide
 Under a vele, that wimpled² was full low;
 And over all a blacke stole³ shee did throw:
 As one that inly mournd, so was she sad,
 And heavie sate upon her palfrey slow;
 Seemed in heart some hidden care she had,
 And by her, in a line, a milkewhite lambe she lad.⁴
5. So pure and innocent, as that same lambe,
 She was in life and every vertuous lore⁵;
 And by descent from Royall lynage came
 Of ancient Kinges and Queenes, that had of yore
 Their scepters stretcht from East to Western shore,
 And all the world in their subjection held;
 Till that infernall feend with foule uprore
 Forwasted⁶ all their land, and them expeld;
 Whom to avenge she had this Knight from far compeld.
6. Behind her farre away a Dwarfe did lag,
 That lasie seemd, in being ever last,
 Or wearied with bearing of her bag
 Of needments at his backe. Thus as they past,
 The day with cloudes was suddeine overcast,
 And angry Jove an hideous storme of raine
 Did poure into his Lemans⁷ lap so fast,
 That everie wight⁸ to shrowd⁹ it did constrain;
 And this faire couple eke¹⁰ to shroud themselves were fain.

¹Yearn.² Folded into plaits.³ Cloak.⁴ Led.⁵ Instruction.⁶ Laid waste.⁷ Lover's,⁸ Person.⁹ Take shelter.¹⁰ Also.

7. Enforst to seeke some covert nigh at hand,
A shadie grove not farr away they spied,
That promist ayde the tempest to withstand;
Whose loftie trees, yclad with sommers pride,
Did spred so broad, that heavens light did hide,
Not perceable with power of any starr:
And all within were pathes and alleies wide,
With footing worne, and leading inward farr.
Faure harbour that them seems, so in they entred ar.
8. And foorth they passe, with pleasure forward led,
Joying to heare the birdes sweete harmony,
Which, therein shrouded from the tempest dred,
Seemd in their song to scorne the cruell sky.
Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,
The sayling Pine; the Cedar proud and tall;
The vine-propp Elme; the Poplar never dry;
The builder Oake, sole king of forrests all;
The Aspine good for staves; the Cypressse funerall;
9. The Laurell, meed of mightie Conquerours
And Poets sage; the Firre that weepeth still:
The Willow, worne of forlorne Paramours¹;
The Eugh, obedient to the benders will;
The Birch for shaftes; the Sallow for the mill;
The Mirrhe sweete-bleeding in the bitter wound;
The warlike Beech; the Ash for nothing ill;
The fruitfull Olive; and the Platane round;
The carver² Holme; the Maple seeldom inward sound.
10. Led with delight, they thus beguile the way,
Untill the blustering storme is overblowne;
When, weening³ to retorne whence they did stray,
They cannot finde that path, which first was showne,
But wander too and fro in waies unknowne,
Furthest from end then, when they neerest weene,
That makes them doubt their wits be not their owne:
So many pathes, so many turnings seene,
That which of them to take in diverse doubt they been.⁴

¹ Lovers.² Fit for carving.³ Thinking.⁴ Are.

11. At last resolving forward still to fare,
 Till that some end they finde, or in or out,
 That path they take that beaten seemd most bare,
 And like to lead the labyrinth about;
 Which when by tract they hunted had throughout,
 At length it brought them to a hollowe cave
 Amid the thickest woods. The Champion stout
 Eftsoones dismounted from his courser brave,
 And to the Dwarfe a while his needlesse spere he gave.
12. 'Be well aware,¹ 'quoth then that Ladie milde,
 'Least suddaine mischiefes ye too rash provoke:
 The danger hid, the place unknowne and wilde,
 Breedeth dreadfull doubts. Oft fire is without smoke,
 And perill without show: therefore your stroke,
 Sir Knight, with-hold, till further tryall made.'
 'Ah Ladie,' (sayd he) 'shame were to revoke
 The forward footing for an hidden shade:
 Vertue gives her selfe light through darknesse for to wade.'
13. 'Yea but' (quoth she) 'the perill of this place
 I better wot² then you: though nowe too late
 To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,
 Yet wisdomes warnes, whilst foot is in the gate,
 To stay the steppe, ere forced to retrate.
 This is the wandring wood, this *Errours* den,
 A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:
 Therefore I read³ beware.' 'Fly, fly!' (quoth then
 The fearefull Dwarfe) 'this is no place for living men.'
14. But, full of fire and greedy hardiment,⁴
 The youthfull Knight could not for ought be staide;
 But forth unto the darksom hole he went,
 And looked in: his glistering armor made
 A litle glooming light, much like a shade;
 By which he saw the ugly monster plaine,
 Halfe like a serpent horribly displaide,⁵
 But th'other halfe did womans shape retaine,
 Most lothsom, filthie, foule, and full of vile disdaine.⁶

¹ On the watch.² Know.³ Advise.⁴ Hardihood.⁵ Spread out.⁶ That which is despicable.

15. And, as she lay upon the durtie ground,
 Her huge long taile her den all overspred,
 Yet was in knots and many boughtes¹ upwound,
 Pointed with mortall sting. Of her there bred
 A thousand yong ones, which she dayly fed,
 Sucking upon her poisnous dug; each one
 Of sundrie shapes, yet all ill-favored:
 Soone as that uncouth² light upon them shone,
 Into her mouth they crept, and suddain all were gone.
16. Their dam upstart out of her den effraide,³
 And rushed forth, hurling her hideous taile
 About her cursed head; whose folds displaid
 Were stretcht now forth at length without entraile.⁴
 She lookt about, and seeing one in mayle,
 Armed to point, sought backe to turne againe;
 For light she hated as the deadly bale,⁵
 Ay⁶ wont⁷ in desert darknes to remaine,
 Where plain none might her see, nor she see any plaine.
17. Which when the valiant Elfe⁸ perceiv'd, he lept
 As Lyon fierce upon the flying pray,
 And with his trenchand⁹ blade her boldly kept
 From turning backe, and forced her to stay:
 Therewith enrag'd she loudly gan to bray,¹⁰
 And turning fierce her speckled taile advaunst,
 Threatning her angrie sting, him to dismay;
 Who, nought aghast, his mightie hand enhaunst¹¹:
 The stroke down from her head unto her shoulder glaunst.
18. Much daunted with that dint her sence was dazd;
 Yet kindling rage her selfe she gathered round,
 And all attonce her beastly bodie raizd
 With doubled forces high above the ground:
 Tho,¹² wrapping up her wrethed¹³ sterne¹⁴ arownd,
 Lept fierce upon his shield, and her huge traine
 All suddenly about his body wound,
 That hand or foot to stirr he strove in vaine.
 God helpe the man so wrapt in Errours endlesse traine!

¹ Loops.² Unaccustomed.³ Frightened.⁴ Entanglement.⁵ Evil.⁶ Ever.⁷ Accustomed.⁸ Fairy.⁹ Trenchant, cutting.¹⁰ Cry out.¹¹ Raised.¹² Then.¹³ Twisted.¹⁴ Tail.

19. His Lady, sad to see his sore constraint,¹
 Cride out, 'Now, now, Sir knight, shew what ye bee;
 Add faith unto your force, and be not faint;
 Strangle her, els she sure will strangle thee.'
 That when he heard, in great perplexitie,
 His gall did grate² for grieve and high disdaine;
 And, knitting all his force, got one hand free,
 Wherewith he grypt her gorge³ with so great paine,
 That soone to loose her wicked bands did her constraine.⁴
20. Therewith she spewd out of her filthie maw
 A floud of poyson horrible and blacke,
 Full of great lumps of flesh and gobbets⁵ raw,
 Which stunck so vildly, that it forst him slacke
 His grasping hold, and from her turne him backe.
 Her vomit full of bookes and papers was,
 With loathly frogs and toades, which eyes did lacke,
 And creeping sought way in the weedy gras:
 Her filthie parbreake⁶ all the place defiled has.
21. As when old father Nilus gins to swell
 With timely pride above the Aegyptian vale
 His fattie waves doe 'fertile slime outwell,
 And overflow each plaine and lowly dale:
 But, when his later spring gins to avale,⁷
 Huge heapes of mudd he leaves, wherein there breed
 Ten thousand kindes of creatures, partly male
 And partly femall, of his fruitful seed;
 Such ugly monstrous shapes elswher may no man reed.⁸
22. The same so sore annoyed has the knight,
 That, welnigh choked with the deadly stinke,
 His forces faile, ne can no lenger fight:
 Whose corage when the feend perceivd to shrinke,
 She poured forth out of her hellish sinke⁹
 Her fruitfull cursed spawn of serpents small,
 Deformed monsters, fowle, and blacke as inke,
 Which swarming all about his legs did crall,
 And him encombred sore, but could not hurt at all.

¹ Distress.⁶ Vomit.² Irritate.⁷ To sink.³ Throat.⁸ Imagine.⁴ Compel.⁹ Deposit.⁵ Mouthfuls.

23. As gentle shepheard in sweete eventide,
When ruddy Phebus gins to welke¹ in west,
High on an hill, his flocke to vewen wide,
Markes which doe byte their hasty supper best;
A cloud of cumbrous gnattes doe him molest,
All striving to infixe their feeble stinges,
That from their noyance he no where can rest;
But with his clownish hands their tender wings
He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.
24. Thus ill bestedd,² and fearefull more of shame
Then of the certeine perill he stood in,
Halfe furious unto his foe he came,
Resolvd in minde all suddenly to win,
Or soone to lose, before he once would lin³;
And stroke at her with more then manly force,
That from her body, full of filthie sin,
He raft her hatefull heade without remorse:
A streame of cole-black blood forth gushed from her corse.
25. Her scattered brood, soone as their Parent deare
They saw so rudely falling to the ground,
Groning full deadly, all with troublous feare
Gathred themselves about her body round,
Weening⁴ their wonted entrance to have found
At her wide mouth; but being there withstood,⁵
They flocked all about her bleeding wound,
And sucked up their dying mothers bloud,
Making her death their life, and eke⁶ her hurt their good.
26. That detestable sight him much amazde,
To see th' unkindly Impes, of heaven accurst,
Devoure their dam; on whom while so he gazd,
Having all satisfide their bloody thirst,
Their bellies swolne he saw with fulnesse burst,
And bowels gushing forth: well worthy end
Of such as drunke her life the which them nurst!
Now needeth him no lenger labour spend,
His foes have slaine themselves, with whom he should
contend.

¹ Fade.² Beset.³ Cease.⁴ Thinking.⁵ Prevented.⁶ Also.

27. His Lady, seeing all that chaunst from farre,
 Approcht in hast to greet his victorie;
 And saide, 'Faire knight, borne under happie starre,
 Who see your vanquisht foes before you lye,
 Well worthie be you of that Armory,¹
 Wherein ye have great glory wonne this day,
 And proov'd your strength on a strong enimie,
 Your first adventure: many such I pray,
 And henceforth ever wish that like succeed it may!'
28. Then mounted he upon his Steede againe,
 And with the Lady backward sought to wend.
 That path he kept which beaten was most plaine,
 Ne² ever would to any byway bend,
 But still did follow one unto the end,
 The which at last out of the wood them brought.
 So forward on his way (with God to frend)
 He passed forth, and new adventure sought:
 Long way he traveiled before he heard of ought.
29. At length they chaunst to meet upon the way
 An aged Sire, in long blacke weedes³ yclad,
 His feete all bare, his beard all hoarie gray,
 And by his belt his booke he hanging had:
 Sober he seemde, and very sagely sad,
 And to the ground his eyes were lowly bent,
 Simple in shew, and voide of malice bad;
 And all the way he prayed as he went,
 And often knockt his brest, as one that did repent.
30. He faire the knight saluted, louting⁴ low,
 Who faire him quited,⁵ as that courteous was;
 And after asked him, if he did know
 Of straunge adventures, which abroad did pas.
 'Ah! my dear sonne,' (quoth he) 'how should, alas!
 Silly⁶ old man, that lives in hidden cell,
 Bidding his beades all day for his trespas,
 Tydings of warre and worldly trouble tell?
 With holy father sits⁷ not with such thinges to mell.⁸

¹ Armor.⁵ Requited, answered.² Nor.⁶ Innocent.³ Garments.⁷ It is suitable.⁴ Bowing.⁸ To mingle.

31. 'But if of daunger, which hereby doth dwell,
And homebredd evil ye desire to heare,
Of a straunge man I can you tidings tell,
That wasteth all this countrie, farre and neare.'
'Of such,' (saide he,) 'I chiefly doe inquire,
And shall thee well rewarde to shew the place,
In which that wicked wight his dayes doth weare;
For to all knighthood it is foule disgrace,
That such a cursed creature lives so long a space.'
32. 'Far hence' (quoth he) 'in wastfull wilderness
His dwelling is, by which no living wight
May ever passe, but thorough¹ great distresse.'
'Now,' (saide the Ladie,) 'draweth toward night,
And well I wote,² that of your later fight
Ye all forwearied be; for what so strong,
But, wanting rest, will also want of might?
The Sunne, that measures heaven all day long,
At night doth baite³ his steedes the Ocean waves emong.
33. 'Then with the Sunne take, Sir, your timely rest,
And with new day new worke at once begin:
Untroubled night, they say, gives counsell best.'
'Right well, Sir knight, ye have advised bin,'
Quoth then that aged man: 'the way to win
Is wisely to advise; now day is spent:
Therefore with me ye may take up your In⁴
For this same night.' The knight was well content;
So with that godly father to his home they went.
34. A litle lowly Hermitage it was,
Downe in a dale, hard by a forests side,
Far from resort of people that did pas
In traveill to and froe: a litle wyde⁵
There was an holy chappell edifyde,⁶
Wherein the Hermite dewly wont to say
His holy thinges each morne and eventyde:
Thereby a christall streame did gently play,
Which from a sacred fountaine welled forth alway.

¹ Through. ² Know. ³ Feed. ⁴ Lodging. ⁵ Remote. ⁶ Built.

35. Arrived there, the litle house they fill,
Ne looke for entertainment where none was;
Rest is their feast, and all thinges at their will:
The noblest mind the best contentment has.
With faire discourse the evening so they pas;
For that olde man of pleasing wordes had store,
And well could file his tongue as smooth as glas:
He told of Saintes and Popes, and evermore
He strowd an *Ave-Mary* after and before.
36. The drouping night thus creepeth on them fast;
And the sad humor loading their eyeliddes,
As messenger of Morpheus, on them cast
Sweet slombring deaw,¹ the which to sleep them biddes.
Unto their lodgings then his guesstes he riddes²:
Where when all drownd in deadly sleepe he findes,
He to his studie goes; and there amidde
His magick bookes, and artes of sundrie kindes,
He seekes out mighty charmes to trouble sleepy minds.
37. Then choosing out few words most horrible,
(Let none them read) thereof did verses frame;
With which, and other spelles like terrible,
He bad awake blacke Plutoes griesly Dame;
And cursed heven; and spake reprochful shame
Of highest God, the Lord of life and light:
A bold bad man, that dar'd to call by name
Great Gorgon, prince of darknes and dead night;
At which Cocytus quakes, and Styx is put to flight.
38. And forth he cald out of deepe darknes dredd
Legions of Sprights, the which, like litle flyes
Fluttring about his ever-damned hedd,
Awaite whereto their service he applyes,
To aide his friendes, or fray³ his enimies.
Of those he chose out two, the falsest twoo,
And fittest for to forge true-seeming lyes:
The one of them he gave a message too,
The other by him selfe staide, other worke to doo.

¹ Dew.² Despatches.³ Frighten.

39. He, making speedy way through spersed¹ ayre,
And through the world of waters wide and deepe,
To Morpheus house doth hastily repaire.
Amid the bowels of the earth full steepe,
And low, where dawning day doth never peepe,
His dwelling is; there Tethys his wet bed
Doth ever wash, and Cynthia still doth steepe
In silver deaw² his ever-drouping hed,
Whiles sad Night over him her mantle black doth spread.
40. Whose double gates he findeth locked fast,
The one faire fram'd of burnisht Yvory,
The other all with silver overcast;
And wakeful dogges before them farre doe lye,
Watching to banish Care their enemy,
Who oft is wont to trouble gentle Sleepe.
By them the Sprite doth passe in quietly,
And unto Morpheus comes, whom drowned deepe
In drowsie fit he findes; of nothing he takes keepe.³
41. And more to lulle him in his slumber soft,
A trickling streame from high rock tumbling downe,
And ever-drizling raine upon the loft,⁴
Mixt with a murmuring winde, much like the sowne⁵
Of swarming Bees, did cast him in a swowne.⁶
No other noyse, nor peoples troublous cries,
As still are wont t'annoy the walled towne,
Might there be heard; but carelesse Quiet lyes
Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enimes.
42. The Messenger approaching to him spake;
But his waste wordes retournd to him in vaine:
So sound he slept, that nought mought⁷ him awake.
Then rudely he him thrust, and pusht with paine,
Whereat he gan to stretch; but he againe
Shooke him so hard, that forced him to speake.
As one then in a dreame, whose dryer braine
Is tost with troubled sights and fancies weake,
He mumbled soft, but would not all his silence breake.

¹ Dispersed.⁵ Sound.² Dew.⁶ Swoon.³ Heed.⁷ Might.⁴ Sky.

43. The Sprite then gan more boldly him to wake,
 And threatned unto him the dreaded name
 Of Hecate: whereat he gan to quake,
 And, lifting up his lompish¹ head, with blame
 Halfe angrie asked him, for what he came.
 'Hether' (quoth he,) 'me Archimago sent,
 He that the stubborne Sprites can wisely tame,
 He bids thee to him send for his intent
 A fit false dreame, that can delude the sleepers sent.'²

44. The God obayde; and, calling forth straight way
 A diverse³ Dreame out of his prison darke,
 Delivered it to him, and downe did lay
 His heauie head, deuoid of careful carke⁴;
 Whose sences all were straight benumbd and starke.⁵
 He, backe returning by the Yvorie dore,
 Remounted up as light as chearefull Larke;
 And on his litle winges the dreame he bore
 In hast vnto his Lord, where he him left afore.

[With the help of the false dream Archimago then persuades
 the Red Cross knight that Una is untrue.]

CANTO II

The guilefull great Enchaunter parts
 The Redcrosse Knight from Truth:
 Into whose stead faire falsehood steps,
 And workes him woefull ruth.

* * * * *

6. Retourning to his bed in torment great,
 And bitter anguish of his guilty sight,
 He could not rest; but did his stout heart eat,
 And wast his inward gall with deepe despight,⁶
 Yrkesome⁷ of life, and too long lingring night.
 At last faire Hesperus in highest skie
 Had spent his lampe, and brought forth dawning light:
 Then up he rose, and clad him hastily:
 The dwarfe him brought his steed; so both away do fly.

¹ Stupid.

² Scent, perception.

³ Capable of various forms.

⁴ Care, anxiety.

⁵ Stiff.

⁶ Aversion.

⁷ Weary.

7. Now when the rosy fingred Morning faire;
Weary of aged Tithones saffron bed,
Had spred her purple robe through deawy aire,
And the high hils Titan discovered,
The royall virgin shooke off drousy-hed¹;
And, rising forth out of her baser² bowre,
Lookt for her knight, who far away was fled,
And for her dwarfe, that wont to wait each howre:
Then gan she wail and weepe to see that woeful stowre.³
8. And after him she rode, with so much speede
As her slowe beast could make; but all in vaine,
For him so far had borne his light-foot steede,
Pricked with wrath and fiery fierce disdaine,
That him to follow was but fruitlesse paine:
Yet she her weary limbes would never rest;
But every hil and dale, each wood and plaine,
Did search, sore grieved in her gentle brest,
He so ungently left her, whome she loved best.
9. But subtill Archimago, when his guests
He saw divided into double parts,
And Una wandring in woods and forrests,
Th' end of his drift,⁴ he praised his divelish arts,
That had such might over true meaning harts.
Yet rests not so, but other meanes doth make,
How he may worke unto her further smarts;
For her he hated as the hissing snake,
And in her many troubles did most pleasure take.
10. He then devisde himselfe how to disguise;
For by his mighty science he could take
As many formes and shapes in seeming wise,⁵
As ever Proteus to himselfe could make:
Sometime a fowle, sometime a fish in lake,
Now like a foxe, now like a dragon fell;
That of himselfe he ofte for feare would quake,
And oft would flie away. O! who can tell
The hidden powre of herbes, and might of Magick spel?

¹ Drowsiness.² Lower.³ Peril.⁴ Aim, purpose.⁵ Manner.

11. But now seemde best the person to put on
 Of that good knight, his late beguiled guest:
 In mighty armes he was yclad anon,
 And silver shield; upon his coward brest
 A bloody crosse, and on his craven crest
 A bouch of heares discolour'd diversly.
 Full jolly¹ knight he seemde, and wel address;
 And when he sate upon his courser free,
 Saint George himselve ye would have deemed him to be.
12. But he, the knight whose semblaunt² he did beare,
 The true Saint George, was wandred far away,
 Still flying from his thoughts and gealous feare:
 Will³ was his guide, and grieve led him astray.
 At last him chaunst to meete upon the way
 A faithlesse Sarazin, all armde to point,
 In whose great shield was writ with letters gay
*Sans joy*⁴; full large of limbe and every joint
 He was, and cared not for God or man a point.
13. Hee had a faire companion of his way,
 A goodly Lady clad in scarlot red,
 Purpled⁵ with gold and pearle of rich assay;
 And like a Persian mitre on her hed
 Shee wore, with crowns and owches⁶ garnished,
 The which her lavish lovers to her gave.
 Her wanton palfrey all was overspred
 With tinsell trappings, woven like a wave,
 Whose bridle rung with golden bells and bosses⁷ brave.
14. With faire disport, and courting dalliaunce,
 She intertaine her lover all the way;
 But, when she saw the knight his speare advaunce,
 She soone left off her mirth and wanton play,
 And bad her knight addresse him to the fray,
 His foe was nigh at hand. He, pricke with pride
 And hope to winne his Ladies heart that day,
 Forth spurred fast: adowne his coursers side
 The red blood trickling staine the way, as he did ride.

¹ Brave. ² Appearance. ³ Passion. ⁴ Faithless. ⁵ Embroidered.

⁶ Gold ornaments, brooches.

⁷ The knobs at the ends of the mouthpiece of a bridle-bit.

15. The knight of the Redcrosse, when him he spide
Spurring so hote with rage dispiteous,¹
Gan fairely couch his speare, and towards ride.
Soone meete they both, both fell and furious,
That, daunted with theyr forces hideous,
Their steeds doe stagger, and amazed stand;
And eke themselves, too rudely rigorous,
Astonied with the stroke of their owne hand,
Doe backe rebutte,² and ech to other yealdeth land.
16. As when two rams, stird with ambitious pride,
Fight for the rule of the rich fleeced flocke,
Their horned fronts so fierce on either side
Doe meete, that, with the terror of the shocke,
Astonied, both stand sencelesse as a blocke,
Forgetfull of the hanging³ victory:
So stood these twaine, unmoved as a rocke,
Both staring fierce, and holding idely
The broken reliques of their former cruelty.
17. The Sarazin, sore daunted with the buffe,⁴
Snatcheth his sword, and fiercely to him flies;
Who well it wards, and quyteth⁵ cuff with cuff:
Each others equall puissaunce envies,
And through their iron sides with cruell spies⁶
Does seeke to perce; repining courage yields
No foote to foe: the flashing fier flies,
As from a forge, out of their burning shields;
And streams of purple bloud new die the verdant fields.
18. 'Curse on that Cross,' (quoth then the Sarazin,)
'That keepes thy body from the bitter fitt!⁷
Dead long ygoe, I wote, thou haddest bin,
Had not that charme from thee forwarned itt:
But yet I warne thee now assured sitt,
And hide thy head.' Therewith upon his crest
With rigor so outrageous he smitt,
That a large share it hewd out of the rest,
And glauncing downe his shield from blame⁸ him fairly blest.

¹ Pitiless.² Recoil.³ Suspended.⁴ Blow.⁵ Answers.⁶ Glances.⁷ Stroke.⁸ Hurt.

19. Who, thereat wondrous wroth, the sleeping spark
Of native vertue gan eftsoones revive;
And at his haughty helmet making mark,
So hugely stroke, that it the steele did rive,¹
And cleft his head. He, tumbling downe alive,
With bloudy mouth his mother earth did kis,
Greeting his grave: his grudging ghost did strive
With the fraile flesh; at last it flitted is,
Whither the soules doe fly of men that live amis.
20. The Lady, when she saw her champion fall
Like the old ruins of a broken towre,
Staid not to waile his woefull funerall,
But from him fled away with all her powre;
Who after her as hastily gan scowre,²
Bidding the dwarfe with him to bring away
The Sarazins shield, signe of the conqueroure.
Her soone he overtooke, and bad to stay;
For present cause was none of dread her to dismay.
21. Shee turning backe, with ruefull countenaunce,
Cride, 'Mercy, mercy, Sir, vouchsafe to show
On silly Dame, subject to hard mischaunce,
And to your mighty wil!' Her humblesse low,
In so ritch weedes, and seeming glorious show,
Did much emmove his stout heroïcke heart;
And said, 'Deare dame, your suddein overthrow
Much rueth me; but now put feare apart,
And tel both who ye be, and who that tooke your part.'
22. Melting in teares, then gan shee thus lament.
'The wretched woman, whom unhappy howre
Hath now made thrall to your commandement,
Before that angry heavens list³ to lowre,⁴
And fortune false betraide me to thy powre,
Was (O! what now availeth that I was?)
Borne the sole daughter of an Emperour,
He that the wide West under his rule has,
And high hath set his throne where Tiberis doth pas.

¹ Split.² Hurry.³ It pleased.⁴ Threaten.

23. 'He, in the first flowre of my freshest age,
Betrothed me unto the onely haire
Of a most mighty king, most rich and sage:
Was never Prince so faithfull and so faire,
Was never Prince so meeke and debonaire;
But ere my hoped day of spousall shone,
My dearest Lord fell from high honors staire
Into the hands of hys accursed fone,¹
And cruelly was slaine; that shall I ever mone.
24. 'His blessed body, spoild of lively breath,
Was afterward, I know not how, convaidd,
And fro me hid: of whose most innocent death
When tidings came to mee, unhappy maid,
O, how great sorrow my sad soule assaid!²
Then forth I went his woefull corse to find,
And many yeares throughout the world I straid,
A virgin widow, whose deepe wounded mind
With love long time did languish, as the stricken hind.

[She then fell, she continues, into the power of this Saracen, Sans foy, who was the eldest of three brethren, Sans foy (Faithless), Sans loy (Lawless), and Sans joy (Joyless).]

26. 'In this sad plight, friendlesse, unfortunate,
Now miserable I, Fidessa, dwell,
Craving of you, in pittie of my state,
To doe none ill, if please ye not doe well.'
He in great passion al this while did dwell,
More busying his quicke eies her face to view,
Then his dull eares to heare what shee did tell;
And said, 'faire lady, hart of flint would rew
The undeserved woes and sorrowes, which ye shew.
27. 'Henceforth in safe assuraunce may ye rest,
Having both found a new friend you to aid,
And lost an old foe that did you molest;
Better new friend then an old foe is said.'
With chaunge of chear³ the seeming simple maid
Let fal her eien, as shamefast, to the earth,

¹ Foes.² Tried.³ Expression of the face.

And yeelding soft, in that she nought gainsaid,
So forth they rode, he feining seemely merth,
And shee coy lookes: so dainty, they say, maketh derth.¹

28. Long time they thus together traveled;
Til, weary of their way, they came at last
Where grew two goodly trees, that faire did spread
Their armes abroad, with gray mosse overcast;
And their greene leaves, trembling with every blast,
Made a calme shadowe far in compasse round:
The fearefull shepheard, often there aghast,
Under them never sat, ne wont there sound
His mery oaten pipe, but shund th' unlucky ground.
29. But this good knight, soone as he them can spie,
For the coole shade him thither hastily got:
For golden Phoebus, now ymounted hie,
From fiery wheelles of his faire chariot
Hurled his beame so scorching cruell hot,
That living creature mote it not abide;
And his new Lady it endured not.
There they alight, in hope themselves to hide
From the fierce heat, and rest their weary limbs a tide.
30. Faire seemely pleasaunce each to other makes,
With goodly purposes, there as they sit;
And in his falsed fancy he her takes
To be the fairest wight that lived yit;
Which to expresse he bends his gentle wit:
And, thinking of those braunches greene to frame
A girlond for her dainty forehead fit,
He pluckt a bough; out of whose rifte there came
Smal drops of gory bloud, that trickled down the same.
31. Therewith a piteous yelling voice was heard,
Crying 'O! spare with guilty hands to teare
My tender sides in this rough rynd embard;
But fly, ah! fly far hence away, for feare
Least to you hap that happend to me heare,
And to this wretched Lady, my deare love;

¹ Dearnness, the state of being highly esteemed.

O, too deare love, love bought with death too deare!¹
Astond he stood, and up his heare did hove;
And with that suddein horror could no member move.

32. At last whenas the dreadfull passion
Was overpast, and manhood well awake,
Yet musing at the straunge occasion,
And doubting much his sence, he thus bespake:
'What voice of damned Ghost from Limbo lake,
Or guilefull spright wandring in empty aire,
Both which fraile men doe oftentimes mistake,
Sends to my doubtful eares these speaches rare,²
And ruefull plaints, me bidding guiltlesse blood to spare?'
33. Then, groning deep; 'Nor damned Ghost,' (quoth he,)
'Nor guileful sprite to thee these words doth speake;
But once a man, Fradubio, now a tree;
Wretched man, wretched tree! whose nature weake
A cruell witch, her cursed will to wreake,
Hath thus transformd, and plast in open plaines,
Where Boreas doth blow full bitter bleake,
And scorching Sunne does dry my secret vaines;
For though a tree I seme, yet cold and heat me paines.'
34. 'Say on, Fradubio, then, or man or tree,'
Quoth then the Knight; 'by whose mischievous arts
Art thou misshaped thus, as now I see?
He oft finds med'cine who his grieve imparts,
But double griefs afflict concealing harts,
As raging flames who striveth to suppress.'
'The author then,' (said he) 'of all my smarts,
Is one Duessa, a false sorceresse,
That many errant knights hath broght to wretchednesse.
35. In prime of youthly yeares, when corage hott
The fire of love, and joy of chevalree,
First kindled in my brest, it was my lott
To love this gentle Lady, whome ye see
Now not a Lady, but a seeming tree;
With whome, as once I rode accompanye,

¹ Rise.² Extraordinary.

Me chaunced of a knight encountred bee,
That had a like faire Lady by his syde;
Lyke a faire Lady, but did fowle Duessa hyde.

36. 'Whose forged beauty he did take in hand
All other Dames to have exceeded farre:
I in defence of mine did likewise stand,
Mine, that did then shine as the Morning starre.
So both to batteill fierce arraunged arre,
In which his harder fortune was to fall
Under my speare: such is the dye of warre.
His Lady, left as a prise martiall,
Did yield her comely person to be at my call.
37. 'So doubly lov'd of ladies, unlike faire,
Th' one seeming such, the other such indeede,
One day in doubt I cast for to compare
Whether in beauties glorie did exceede:
A Rosy girlond was the victors meede.
Both seemde to win, and both seemde won to bee,
So hard the discord was to be agreeede.
Frælissa was as faire as faire mote¹ bee,
And ever false Duessa seemde as faire as shee.
38. 'The wicked witch, now seeing all this while
The doubtfull ballaunce equally to sway,
What not by right she cast to win by guile;
And by her hellish science raisd streight way
A foggy mist that overcast the day,
And a dull blast, that breathing on her face
Dimmed her former beauties shining ray,
And with foule ugly forme did her disgrace:
Then was she fayre alone, when none was faire in place.
39. 'Then cride she out, "Fye, fye! deformed wight,
'Whose borrowed beautie now appeareth plaine
'To have before bewitched all mens sight:
'O! leave her soone, or let her soone be slaine."
Her loathly visage viewing with disdaine,
Eftsoones I thought her such as she me told,

¹ Might.

And would have kild her; but with faigned paine
The false witch did my wrathfull hand withhold:
So left her, where she now is turnd to treen¹ mould.

40. 'Thensforth I tooke Duessa for my Dame,
And in the witch unweeting² joyd long time,
Ne ever wist but that she was the same;
Till on a day (that day is everie Prime,³
When Witches wont do penance for their crime,⁴)
I chaunst to see her in her proper hew,
Bathing her selfe in origane⁴ and thyme:
A filthy foule old woman I did vew,
That ever to have toucht her I did deadly rew.
41. 'Her neather partes misshapen, monstrous,
Were hidd in water, that I could not see;
But they did seeme more foule and hideous,
Then womans shape man would beleewe to bee.
Thensforth from her most beastly companie
I gan refraine, in minde to slipp away,
Soone as appeard safe opportunitie:
For danger great, if not assurd decay,
I saw before mine eyes, if I were knowne to stray.
42. 'The divelish hag by chaunges of my cheare⁵
Perceiv'd my thought; and, drownd in sleepeie night,
With wicked herbes and oyntments did besmeare
My body all, through charmes and magicke might,
That all my senses were bereaved quight:
Then brought she me into this desert waste,
And by my wretched lovers side me pight;
Where now, enclosd in wooden wals full faste,
Banisht from living wights, our wearie daies we waste.'
43. 'But how long time,' said then the Elfin knight,
'Are you in this misformed hous to dwell?'
'We may not chaunge,' (quoth he,) 'this evill plight,
Till we be bathed in a living well:
That is the terme prescribed by the spell.'

¹ Of trees.⁴ Wild marjoram.² Not knowing, ignorant.⁵ Expression of the face.³ Spring.

'O! how,' sayd he, 'mote I that well out find,
That may restore you to your wonted well?'
'Time and suffised fates to former kynnd
Shall us restore; none else from hence may us unbynd.'

44. The false Duessa, now Fidessa hight,
Heard how in vaine Fradubio did lament,
And knew well all was true. But the good knight,
Full of sad feare and ghastly dreriment,¹
When all this speech the living tree had spent,
The bleeding bough did thrust into the ground,
That from the blood he might be innocent,
And with fresh clay did close the wooden wound:
Then, turning to his Lady, dead with feare her fownd.
45. Her seeming dead he fownd with feigned feare,
As all unweeting² of that well she knew;
And paynd himselfe with busie care to reare
Her out of carelesse swowne.³ Her eyelids blew,
And dimmed sight, with pale and deadly hew,
At last she up gan lift: with trembling cheare
Her up he tooke, (too simple and too trew)
And oft her kist. At length, all passed feare,
He set her on her steede, and forward forth did beare.

CANTO III

Forsaken Truth long seekes her love,
And makes the Lyon mylde;
Marres blind Devotions mart, and fals
In hand of leachour vylde.⁴

1. NOUGHT is there under heav'ns wide hollownesse,
That moves more deare compassion of mind,
Then beautie brought t'unworthie wretchednesse
Through envies snares, or fortunes freakes unkind.
I, whether lately through her brightnes blynd,
Or through alleageance, and fast fealty,
Which I do owe unto all womankynd,
Feele my hart perst with so great agony,
When such I see, that all for pitty I could dy.

¹ Sorrow.

² Not knowing, ignorant.

³ Swoon.

⁴ Vile.

2. And now it is empassioned¹ so deepe,
For fairest Unaes sake, of whom I sing,
That my frayle eies these lines with teares do steepe,
To thinke how she through guyleful handeling,
Though true as touch, though daughter of a king,
Though faire as ever living wight was fayre,
Though nor in word nor deede ill meriting,
Is from her knight divorced in despayre,
And her dew loves deryv'd² to that vile witches shayre.
3. Yet she, most faithfull Ladie, all this while
Forsaken, wofull, solitarie mayd,
Far from all peoples preace,³ as in exile,
In wildernesses and wastfull deserts strayd,
To seeke her knight; who, subtilly betrayd
Through that late vision which th' Enchaunter wrought,
Had her abandond. She, of nought affrayd,
Through woods and wastnes⁴ wide him daily sought;
Yet wished tydings none of him unto her brought.
4. One day, nigh wearie of the yrkesome way,
From her unhastie beast she did alight;
And on the grasse her dainty limbs did lay
In secrete shadow, far from all mens sight:
From her fayre head her fillet she undight,⁵
And layd her stole aside. Her angels face,
As the great eye of heaven, shyned bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortall eye behold such heavenly grace.
5. It fortun'd, out of the thickest wood
A ramping Lyon rushed suddeinly,
Hunting full greedy after salvage⁶ blood.
Soone as the royall virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have attonce devoured her tender corse;
But to the pray when as he drew more ny,
His bloody rage aswaged with remorse,
And, with the sight amazd, forgat his furious forse.

¹ Made passionate.² Diverted.³ Crowd.⁴ Wilderness.⁵ Took off, undressed.⁶ Savage.

6. In stead thereof he kist her wearie feet,
And lickt her lilly hands with fawning tong,
As he her wronged innocence did weet.¹
O, how can beautie maister the most strong,
And simple truth subdue avenging wrong!
Whose yielded pryde and proud submission,
Still dreading death, when she had marked long,
Her hart gan melt in great compassion;
And drizling teares did shed for pure affection.
7. 'The Lyon, Lord of everie beast in field,'
Quoth she, 'his princely puissance doth abate,
And mightie proud to humble weake does yield,
Forgetfull of the hungry rage, which late
Him prickt, in pittie of my sad estate:
But he, my Lyon, and my noble Lord,
How does he find in cruell hart to hate
Her, that him lov'd, and ever most adord
As the God of my life? why hath he me abhord?'
8. Redounding² teares did choke th' end of her plaint,
Which softly ecchoed from the neighbour wood;
And, sad to see her sorrowfull constraint,
The kingly beast upon her gazing stood:
With pittie calmd downe fell his angry mood.
At last, in close hart shutting up her payne,
Arose the virgin, borne of heavenly brood,
And to her snowy Palfrey got agayne,
To seeke her strayed Champion if she might attayne.
9. The Lyon would not leave her desolate,
But with her went along, as a strong gard
Of her chast person, and a faythfull mate
Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard:
Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and ward;
And, when she wakt, he wayted diligent,
With humble service to her will prepard:
From her fayre eyes he tooke commandement,
And ever by her lookes conceived her intent.

¹ Know.² Overflowing.

[Archimago, disguised as the Red Cross knight, finds Una and the lion.]

26. Ere long he came where Una traveild slow,
And that wilde champion wayting her besyde;
Whome seeing such, for dread hee durst not show
Him selfe too nigh at hand, but turned wyde
Unto an hil; from whence when she him spyde,
By his like seeming shield her knight by name
She weend it was, and towards him gan ride:
Approaching nigh she wist¹ it was the same;
And with faire fearefull humblesse towards him shee came:
27. And weeping said, 'Ah, my long lacked Lord,
Where have ye bene thus long out of my sight?
Much feared I to have bene quite abhord,
Or ought have done, that ye displeasen might,
That should as death unto my deare heart light:
For since mine eie your joyous sight did mis,
My chearefull day is turnd to chearelesse night,
And eke my night of death the shadow is;
But welcome now, my light, and shining lampe of blis!'
28. He thereto meeting said, 'My dearest Dame,
Far be it from your thought, and fro² my wil,
To thinke that knighthood I so much should shame,
As you to leave that have me loved stil,
And chose in Faery court, of meere goodwill,
Where noblest knights were to be found on earth.
The earth shall sooner leave her kindly skil
To bring forth fruit, and make eternal derth,³
Then I leave you, my lief⁴, yborn of heavenly berth.
29. 'And sooth⁵ to say, why I left⁶ you so long,
Was for to seeke adventure in straunge place;
Where, Archimago said, a felon strong
To many knights did daily worke disgrace;
But knight he now shall never more deface:
Good cause of mine excuse, that mote⁶ ye please

¹ Knew.⁴ Love, darling.² From.⁵ Truth.³ Dearth, scarcity.⁶ May.

Well to accept, and evermore embrace
My faithfull service, that by land and seas
Have vowd you to defend. Now then, your plaint appease.'

30. His lovely words her seemd due recompence
Of all her passed paines: one loving howre
For many yeares of sorrow can dispenge;
A dram of sweete is worth a pound of sowre.
Shee has forgott how many a woeful stowre¹
For him she late endurd; 'she speakes no more
Of past: true is, that true love hath no powre
To looken backe; his eies be fixt before.
Before her stands her knight, for whom she toyld so sore.
31. Much like, as when the beaten marinere,
That long hath wandred in the Ocean wide,
Ofte soust in swelling Tethys saltish teare;
And long time having tand his tawney hide
With blustering breath of Heaven, that none can bide,
And scorching flames of fierce Orions hound;
Soone as the port from far he has espide,
His chearfull whistle merily doth sound,
And Nereus crownes with cups; his mates him pledg
around.
32. Such joy made Una, when her knight she found;
And eke th' enchaunter joyous seemde no lesse
Then the glad marchant, that does vew from ground
His ship far come from watrie wilderness;
He hurles out vows, and Neptune oft doth blesse.
So forth they past; and all the way they spent
Discoursing of her dreadful late distresse,
In which he askt her, what the Lyon ment;
Who told her all that fell, in journey as she went.
33. They had not ridden far, when they might see
One pricking towards them with hastie heat,
Full strongly armd, and on a courser free
That through his fiersnesse fomed all with sweat,

¹ Trouble, conflict.

And the sharpe yron did for anger eat,
When his hot ryder spurd his chauffed¹ side:
His looke was sterne, and seemed still to threat
Cruell revenge, which he in hart did hyde;
And on his shield *Sansloy* in bloody lines was dyde.

34. When nigh he drew unto this gentle payre,
And saw the Red-crosse which the knight did beare,
He burnt in fire; and gan eftsoones prepare
Himselfe to batteill with his couched speare.
Loth² was that other, and did faint through feare,
To taste th' untryed dint of deadly steele:
But yet his Lady did so well him cheare,
That hope of new good hap he gan to feelee;
So bent his speare, and spurd his horse with yron heele

35. But that proud Paynim forward came so ferce
And full of wrath, that, with his sharp-head³ speare,
Through vainly crossed shield he quite did perce;
And, had his staggering steed not shronke for feare,
Through shield and body eke he should him beare:
Yet, so great was the puissance of his push,
That from his sadle quite he did him beare.
He, tombling rudely downe, to ground did rush,
And from his gored wound a well of bloud did gush.

36. Dismounting lightly from his loftie steed,
He to him lept, in minde to reave⁴ his life,
And proudly said; 'Lo! there the worthie meed⁵
Of him that slew Sansfoy with bloody knife:
Henceforth his ghost, freed from repining strife,
In peace may passen over Lethe lake;
When mourning altars, purgd with enimies life,
The black infernall Furies doen⁶ aslake:
Life from Sansfoy thou tookst, Sansloy shall from thee take.'

37. Therewith in haste his helmet gan unlace,
Till Una cride, 'O! hold that heavie hand,
Deare Sir, what ever that thou be in place:
Enough is, that thy foe doth vanquisht stand

¹ Chafed.⁴ Take away, bereave of.² Unwilling.⁵ Recompense.³ Sharp-headed.⁶ Do.

Now at thy mercy: Mercy not withstand;
For he is one the truest knight alive,
Though conquered now he lye on lowly land;
And, whilst him fortune favoured, fayre did thrive
In bloody field; therefore, of life him not deprive.'

38. Her piteous wordes might not abate his rage,
But, rudely rending up his helmet, would
Have slayne him streight; but when he sees his age,
And hoarie head of Archimago old,
His hasty hand he doth amased hold,
And halfe ashamed wondred at the sight:
For the old man well knew he, though untold,
In charmes and magick to have wondrous might,
Ne ever wont in field, ne in round lists, to fight:
39. And said, 'Why Archimago, lucklesse syre,
What doe I see? what hard mishap is this,
That hath thee hether brought to taste mine yre?
Or thine the fault, or mine the error is,
In stead of foe to wound my friend amis?'
He answered nought, but in a traunce still lay,
And on those guilefull dazed eyes of his
The cloude of death did sit. Which doen away,
He left him lying so, ne would no lenger stay:
40. But to the virgin comes; who all this while
Amased stands, her selfe so mockt to see
By him, who has the guerdon¹ of his guile,
For so misfeigning her true knight to bee:
Yet is she now in more perplexitie,
Left in the hand of that same Paynim bold,
From whom her booteth² not at all to flie:
Who, by her cleanly garment catching hold,
Her from her Palfrey pluckt, her visage to behold.
41. But her fiers servant, full of kingly aw
And high disdaine, whenas his souveraine Dame
So rudely handled by her foe he saw,
With gaping jawes full greedy at him came,

¹ Reward.² It profits.

And, ramping¹ on his shield, did weene the same
Have reft away with his sharp rending clawes:
But he was stout, and lust did now inflame
His corage more, that from his griping pawes
He hath his shield redeemd, and forth his swerd he drawes.

42. O! then, too weake and feeble was the forse
Of salvage beast his puissance to withstand;
For he was strong, and of so mightie corse,
As ever wielded speare in warlike hand.
And feates of armes did wisely understand.
Eft soones he perced through his chaufed² chest
With thrilling point of deadly yron brand,
And launcht his Lordly hart: with death opprest
He ror'd aloud, whiles life forsooke his stubborne brest.

43. Who now is left to keepe the forlorne maid
From raging spoile of lawlesse victors will?
Her faithfull gard remov'd, her hope dismaid,
Her selfe a yielded pray to save or spill:
He now, Lord of the field, his pride to fill,
With foule reproches and disdaineful spight
Her vildly entertaines; and, will or nill,
Beares her away upon his courser light:
Her prayers nought prevaile, his rage is more of might.

44. And all the way, with great lamenting paine,
And piteous plaintes, she filleth his dull eares,
That stony hart could riven have in twaine;
And all the way she wetts with flowing teares;
But he, enrag'd with rancor,³ nothing heares.
Her servile beast yet would not leave her so,
But followes her far off, ne ought he feares
To be partaker of her wandring woe;
More mild in beastly kind then that her beastly foe.

¹ Springing.² Irritated, raging.³ Malice.

CANTO VI

From lawlesse lust by wondrous grace
 Fayre Una is releast:
 Whom salvage nation does adore,
 And learnes her wise beheast.¹

* * * * *

7. Eternall providence, exceeding thought,
 Where none appeares can make her selfe a way.
 A wondrous way it for this Lady wrought,
 From Lyons clawes to pluck the gryped² pray.
 Her shrill outeryes and shrieks so loud did bray,
 That all the woodes and forestes did resownd:
 A troupe of Faunes and Satyres far away
 Within the wood were dauncing in a rownd,
 Whiles old Sylvanus slept in shady arber sownd:

8. Who, when they heard that pitteous strained voice,
 In haste forsooke their rurall meriment,
 And ran towardes the far rebownded noyce,
 To weet what wight so loudly did lament.
 Unto the place they come incontinent³:
 Whom when the raging Sarazin espyde,
 A rude, mishapen, monstrous rablement,
 Whose like he never saw, he durst not byde,
 But got his ready steed, and fast away gan ryde.

9. The wyld woodgods, arrived in the place,
 There find the virgin, doolfull, desolate,
 With ruffled rayments, and fayre blubbred⁴ face,
 As her outrageous foe had left her late;
 And trembling yet through feare of former hate.
 All stand amazed at so uncouth sight,
 And gin to pittie her unhappie state:
 All stand astonied at her beautie bright,
 In their rude eyes unworthie of so wofull plight.

¹ Command. ² Grasped. ³ Without delay. ⁴ Swollen from weeping.

10. She, more amazd, in double dread doth dwell;
And every tender part for feare does shake.
As when a greedy Wolfe, through honger fell,¹
A seely² Lamb far from the flock does take,
Of whom he meanes his bloody feast to make,
A Lyon spyes fast running towards him,
The innocent pray in hast he does forsake;
Which, quitt³ from death, yet quakes in every lim
With chaunge of feare, to see the Lyon looke so grim.
11. Such fearefull fitt assaid her trembling hart,
Ne word to speake, ne joynt to move, she had;
The salvage nation feele her secret smart,
And read her sorrow in her count'nance sad;
Their frowning forheades, with rough hornes yclad,
And rustick horror, all asyde doe lay;
And, gently grenning, shew a semblance glad
To comfort her; and, feare to put away,
Their backward bent knees teach her humbly to obay.
12. The doubtfull Damzell dare not yet committ
Her single person to their barbarous truth;
But still twixt feare and hope amazd does sitt,
Late learnd what harme to hasty trust ensu'th.
They, in compassion of her tender youth,
And wonder of her beautie soverayne,
Are wonne with pittie and unwonted ruth;
And, all prostrate upon the lowly playne,
Doe kisse her feete, and fawne on her with count'nance
fayne.
13. Their harts she ghesseth by their humble guise,
And yieldees her to extremitie of time:
So from the ground she fearelesse doth arise,
And walketh forth without suspect⁴ of crime.
They, all as glad as birdes of joyous Pryme,⁵
Thence lead her forth, about her dauncing round,
Shouting, and singing all a shepheards ryme;
And with greene braunches strowing all the ground,
Do worship her as Queene with olive girlond cround.

¹ Fierce. ² Innocent. ³ Liberated, freed. ⁴ Suspicion. ⁵ Morning, dawn.

14. And all the way their merry pipes they sound,
That all the woods with doubled Eccho ring;
And with their horned feet doe weare the ground,
Leaping like wanton kids in pleasant Spring.
So towards old Sylvanus they her bring;
Who, with the noyse awaked, commeth out
To weete the cause, his weake steps governing
And aged limbs on cypresse staddle¹ stout;
And with an yvie twyne his waste is girt about.
15. Far off he wonders what them makes so glad;
Or² Bacchus merry fruit they did invent,³
Or Cybeles franticke rites have made them mad:
They, drawing nigh, unto their God present
That flowre of fayth and beautie excellent.
The God himselfe, vewing that mirrhour rare,
Stood long amazd, and burnt in his intent:
His owne fayre Dryope now he thinkes not faire,
And Pholoe fowle, when her to this he doth compaire.
16. The woodborne people fall before her flat,
And worship her as Goddesses of the wood;
And old Sylvanus selfe bethinkes not what
To thinke of wight so fayre, but gazing stood
In doubt to deeme her borne of earthly brood:
Sometimes dame Venus selfe he seemes to see;
But Venus never had so sober mood:
Sometimes Diana he her takes to be,
But misseth bow and shaftes, and buskins to her knee.
17. By vew of her he ginneth to revive
His ancient love, and dearest Cyparisse;
And calles to mind his pourtraiture alive,
How fayre he was, and yet not fayre to this;
And how he slew with glauncing dart amisse
A gentle Hynd, the which the lovely boy
Did love as life, above all worldly blisse;
For grieve whereof the lad n'ould after joy,
But pynd away in anguish and selfe-wild⁴ annoy.

¹ Staff.² Either.³ Find out.⁴ Self-willed.

18. The wooddy nymphes, faire Hamadryades,
Her to behold do thither runne apace;
And all the troupe of light-foot Naiades
Flocke all about to see her lovely face;
But, when they vewed have her heavenly grace,
They envy her in their malicious mind,
And fly away for feare of fowle disgrace:
But all the Satyres scorne their woody kind,
And henceforth nothing faire but her on earth they find.
19. Glad of such lucke, the luckelesse lucky mayd
Did her content to please their feeble eyes,
And long time with that salvage people stayd,
To gather breath in many miseryes.
During which time her gentle wit she plyes
To teach them truth, which worshipt her in vaine,
And made her th' Image of Idolatryes;
But when their bootlesse¹ zeale she did restrayne
From her own worship, they her Asse would worship fayn.
20. It fortun'd, a noble warlike knight
By just occasion to that forrest came
To seeke his kindred, and the lignage right
From whence he tooke his weldeserved name:
He had in armes abroad wonne muchell fame,
And fild far landes with glorie of his might:
Plaine, faithfull, true, and enemy of shame,
And ever lov'd to fight for Ladies right;
But in vaine glorious frayes he litle did delight.
21. A Satyres sonne, yborne in forrest wyld,
By straunge adventure as it did betyde,
And there begotten of a Lady myld,
Fayre Thyamis, the daughter of Labryde;
That was in sacred bandes of wedlocke tyde
To Therion, a loose unruly swayne,
Who had more joy to raunge the forrest wyde,
And chase the salvage beast with busie payne,
Then serve his Ladies love, and waste² in pleasures vayne.

¹ Unavailing.² Be worn away.

[Seeking him in the forest, she is seized and held prisoner by a satyr, to whom she bears a son. She then returns to her home, but the child is brought up in the forest by the satyr.]

24. For all he taught the tender ymp¹ was but
 To banish cowardize and bastard feare;
 His trembling hand he would him force to put
 Upon the Lyon and the rugged Beare;
 And from the she Beares teats her whelps to teare;
 And eke wyld roring Buls he would him make
 To tame, and ryde their backes, not made to beare;
 And the Robuckes in flight to overtake,
 That everie beast for feare of him did fly, and quake.
25. Thereby so fearlesse and so fell² he grew,
 That his own syre, and maister of his guise,
 Did often tremble at his horrid vew;
 And oft, for dread of hurt, would him advise
 The angry beastes not rashly to despise,
 Nor too much to provoke; for he would learne³
 The Lyon stoup to him in lowly wise,
 (A lesson hard) and make the Libbard sterne
 Leave roaring, when in rage he for revenge did earne⁴.
26. And for to make his powre approved more,
 Wyld beastes in yron yokes he would compell⁵;
 The spotted Panther, and the tusked Bore,
 The Pardale⁶ swift, and the Tigre cruell,
 The Antelope, and Wolfe both fiers and fell;
 And them constraine in equall teme to draw.
 Such joy he had their stubborne harts to quell,
 And sturdie courage tame with dreadfull aw,
 That his behest⁷ they feared as a tyrans law.
27. His loving mother came upon a day
 Unto the woodes, to see her little sonne;
 And chaunst unwares to meet him in the way,
 After his sportes and cruell pastime donne;

¹ Child.
⁵ Drive.

² Fierce.
⁶ Panther.

³ Teach.
⁷ Command.

⁴ Yearne.

When after him a Lyonesse did runne,
That roaring all with rage did lowd requere¹
Her children deare, whom he away had wonne:
The Lyon whelpes she saw how he did beare,
And lull in rugged armes withouten childish feare.

28. The fearefull Dame all quaked at the sight,
And turning backe gan fast to fly away;
Untill, with love revokt² from vaine affright,
She hardly yet perswaded was to stay,
And then to him these womanish words gan say:
'Ah Satyrane, my dearling and my joy,
For love of me leave off this dreadfull play;
To dally thus with death is no fit toy:
Go, find some other play-fellowes, mine own sweet boy.'
29. In these and like delightes of bloody game
He trayned was, till ryper years he raught³;
And there abode, whylst any beast of name
Walkt in that forrest, whom he had not taught
To feare his force: and then his courage haught⁴
Desyrd of forreine foemen to be knowne,
And far abroad for straunge adventures sought;
In which his might was never overthrowne;
But through al Faery lond his famous worth was blown.
30. Yet evermore it was his maner faire,
After long labours and adventures spent,
Unto those native woods for to repaire,
To see his syre and ofspring auncient.
And now he thither came for like intent;
Where he unwares the fairest Una found,
Straunge Lady in so straunge habiliment,
Teaching the Satyres, which her sat around,
Trew sacred lore, which from her sweet lips did redound.
31. He wondred at her wisdom hevenly rare,
Whose like in womens witt he never knew;
And, when her curteous deeds he did compare,
Gan her admire, and her sad sorrowes rew,

¹ Ask back, require. ² Called back. ³ Reached. ⁴ High, haughty.

Blaming of Fortune, which such troubles threw,
 And joyd to make prooffe of her cruelty
 On gentle Dame, so hurtlesse¹ and so trew:
 Thenceforth he kept her goodly company,
 And learnd her discipline of faith and verity.

32. But she, all vowd unto the Redcrosse Knight,
 His wandring perill closely² did lament,
 Ne in this new acquaintaunce could delight;
 But her deare heart with anguish did torment,
 And all her witt in secret counsels spent,
 How to escape. At last in privy wise
 To Satyrane she shewed her intent;
 Who, glad to gain such favour, gan devise,
 How with that pensive Maid he best might thence arise.

33. So on a day, when Satyres all were gone
 To do their service to Sylvanus old,
 The gentle virgin, left behinde alone,
 He led away with corage stout and bold.
 Too late it was to Satyres to be told,
 Or ever hope recover her againe:
 In vaine he seekes that having cannot hold.
 So fast he carried her with carefull paine,
 That they the woods are past, and come now to the
 plaine.

[Satyrane meets Sansloy. While they are fighting, Una makes her escape, pursued by Archimago.]

CANTO VII

The Redcrosse knight is captiue made
 By Gyaunt proud opprest:
 Prince Arthure meets with Una great-
 ly with those newes distrest.

1. WHAT man so wise, what earthly witt so ware,³
 As to discry the crafty cunning traine,
 By which deceit doth maske in visour faire,
 And cast her coulours, died deepe in graine,

¹ Harmless.

² Secretly.

³ Wary.

To seeme like truth, whose shape she well can faine,
And fitting gestures to her purpose frame,
The guiltlesse man with guile to entertaîne?
Great maistresse of her art was that false Dame,
The false Duessa, cloked with Fidessaes name.

2. Who when, returning from the drery Night,
She fownd not in that perilous hous of Pryde,
Where she had left the noble Redcrosse knight,
Her hoped pray, she would no lenger byde,
But forth she went to seeke him far and wide.
Ere long she fownd, whereas he wearie sate
To reeste him selfe foreby¹ a fountaine syde,
Disarmed all of yron-coted Plate;
And by his side his steed the grassy forage ate.
3. Hee feedes upon the cooling shade, and bayes²
His sweatie forehead in the breathing wynd,
Which through the trembling leaves full gently playes,
Wherein the chearefull birds of sundry kynd
Doe chaunt sweet musick to delight his mynd.
The witch approching gan him fayrely greet,
And with reproch of carelesnes unkynd
Upbrayd, for leaving her in place unmeet,
With fowle words tempring faire, soure gall with hony sweet.
4. Unkindnesse past, they gan of solace treat,
And bathe in pleasaunce of the joyous shade,
Which shielded them against the boyling heat,
And with greene boughes decking a gloomy glade,
About the fountaine like a girlond made;
Whose bubbling wave did ever freshly well,
Ne ever would through fervent³ sommer fade:
The sacred Nymph, which therein wont to dwell,
Was out of Dianes favor, as it then befell.
5. The cause was this: one day, when Phœbe fayre
With all her band was following the chace,
This nymph, quite tyr'd with heat of scorching ayre,
Satt downe to rest in midst of the race:

¹ Beside.² Bathes.³ Hot.

The goddesse wroth gan fowly her disgrace,
 And badd the waters, which from her did flow,
 Be such as she her selfe was then in place.
 Thenceforth her waters wexed¹ dull and slow,
 And all that drinke thereof, do faint and feeble grow.

6. Hereof this gentle knight unweeting was;
 And lying downe upon the sandie graile,²
 Dronke of the streame, as cleare as christall glas:
 Eftsoones his manly forces gan to fayle,
 And mightie strong was turnd to feeble frayle.
 His chaunged powres at first them selves not felt;
 Till crudled³ cold his corage gan assayle,
 And cheareful blood in fayntnes chill did melt,
 Which like a fever fit through all his bodie swelt.⁴

7. Yet goodly court he made still to his Dame,
 Poured out in loosnesse on the grassy grownd,
 Both carelesse of his health, and of his fame;
 Till at the last he heard a dreadfull sownd,
 Which through the wood loud bellowing did rebownd,
 That all the earth for terror seemd to shake,
 And trees did tremble. Th' Elfe, therewith astownd,
 Upstartd lightly from his looser make,⁵
 And his unready weapons gan in hand to take.

8. But ere he could his armour on him dight⁶;
 Or gett his shield, his monstrous enemy
 With sturdie steps came stalking in his sight,
 An hideous Geaunt, horrible and hye,
 That with his tallnesse seemd to threat the skye;
 The ground eke groned under him for dreed:
 His living like saw never living eye,
 Ne durst behold: his stature did exceed
 The hight of three the tallest sonnes of mortall seed.

[This giant was the son of Earth and Æolus (the Wind).]

¹ Grew.
⁴ Swelled.

² Gravel.
⁵ Mate.

³ Curdled.
⁶ Arrange, put on.

10. So growen great, through arrogant delight
Of th' high descent whereof he was yborne,
And through presumption of his matchlesse might,
All other powres and knighthood he did scorne.
Such now he marcheth to this man forlorne,
And left to losse; his stalking steps are stayde
Upon a snaggy Oke, which he had torne
Out of his mothers bowelles, and it made
His mortall mace, wherewith his foemen he dismayde.
11. That, when the knight he spyde, he gan advance
With huge force and insupportable mayne,¹
And towards him with dreadfull fury prounce²;
Who haplesse, and eke hopelesse, all in vaine
Did to him pace sad battaile to darrayne,³
Disarmd, disgraste, and inwardly dismayde;
And eke so faint in every joynt and vayne,
Through that fraile fountain which him feeble made,
That scarsely could he weeld his bootlesse⁴ single blade.
12. The Geaunt strooke so maynly⁵ mercilesse,
That could have overthrowne a stony towre;
And, were not heavenly grace that did him blesse,
He had beene pouldred all as thin as flowre:
But he was wary of that deadly stowre,⁶
And lightly lept from underneath the blow:
Yet so exceeding was the villeins powre,
That with the winde it did him overthrow,
And all his sences stound⁷ that still he lay full low.
13. As when that divelish yron Engin, wrought
In deepest Hell, and framd by Furies skill,
With windy Nitre and quick Sulphur fraught,⁸
And ramd with bollet rownd, ordaind to kill,
Conceiveth fyre, the heavens it doth fill
With thundring noyse, and all the ayre doth choke,
That none can breath, nor see, nor heare at will,
Through smouldry cloud of duskish stincking smoke;
That th' only⁹ breath him daunts, who hath escapt the stroke.

¹ Force.⁵ Strongly.² Strut.⁶ Onslaught.³ Draw up in line of battle.⁷ Stunned.⁴ Useless.⁹ Mere.⁸ Freight.

14. So daunted when the Geaunt saw the knight,
 His heaue hand he heaved up on hye,
 And him to dust thought to have battred quight,
 Untill Duessa loud to him gan crye,
 'O great Orgoglio! greatest under skye,
 O! hold thy mortall hand for Ladies sake;
 Hold for my sake, and doe him not to dye,
 But vanquisht thine eternall bondslave make,
 And me, thy worthy meed,¹ unto thy Leman take.'
15. He hearkned, and did stay from further harmes,
 To gayne so goodly guerdon as she spake:
 So willingly she came into his armes,
 Who her as willingly to grace did take,
 And was possessed of his newfound make.²
 Then up he tooke the slombred³ sencelesse corse,
 And, ere he could out of his swowne awake,
 Him to his castle brought with hastie forse,
 And in a Dongeon deepe him threw without remorse.
16. From that day forth Duessa was his deare,
 And highly honoufd in his haughtie eye:
 He gave her gold and purple pall⁴ to weare,
 And triple crowne set on her head full hye,
 And her endowd with royall majesty.
 Then, for to make her dreaded more of men,
 And peoples hartes with awfull terror tye,
 A monstrous beast ybredd in filthy fen⁵
 He chose, which he had kept long time in darksom den.
17. Such one it was, as that renowned Snake
 Which great Alcides in Stremona slew,
 Long fostred in the filth of Lerna lake:
 Whose many heades, out budding ever new,
 Did breed him endlesse labor to subdew.
 But this same Monster much more ugly was,
 For seven great heads out of his body grew,
 An yron brest, and back of scaly bras,
 And all embrewd in blood his eyes did shine as glas.

¹ Reward.² Mate.³ Sleeping.⁴ Mantle.⁵ Marsh.

18. His taylor was stretched out in wondrous length,
That to the hous of heavenly gods it raught¹:
And with extorted powre, and borrow'd strength,
The everburning lamps from thence it braught,²
And proudly threw to ground, as things of naught;
And underneath his filthy feet did tread
The sacred thinges, and holy heastes³ foretaught.⁴
Upon this dreadfull Beast with sevenfold head
He sett the false Duessa, for more aw and dread.
19. The wofull Dwarfe, which saw his maisters fall
Whiles he had keeping of his grasing steed,
And valiant knight become a caytive thrall,
When all was past, tooke up his forlorne weed;
His mightie Armour, missing most at need;
His silver shield, now idle, maisterlesse;
His poynant⁵ speare that many made to bleed,
The rueful monuments of heavinesse;
And with them all departes to tell his great distresse.
20. He had not travaild long, when on the way
He wofull Lady, wofull Una met,
Fast flying from that Paynims greedy pray,
Whilest Satyrane him from pursuit did let⁶:
Who when her eyes she on the Dwarf had set,
And saw the signes that deadly tydinges spake,
She fell to ground for sorrowfull regret,
And lively breath her sad brest did forsake;
Yet might her pitteous hart be seene to pant and quake.
21. The messenger of so unhappie newes
Would faine have dyde: dead was his hart within,
Yet outwardly some little comfort shewes.
At last, recovering hart, he does begin
To rubb her temples, and to chaufe her chin,
And everie tender part does tosse and turne:
So hardly he the flitted life does win
Unto her native prison to retourne;
Then gins her grieved ghost⁷ thus to lament and mourne:

¹ Reached.² Brought.³ Commands.⁴ Taught the contrary of.⁵ Keen.⁶ Hinder.⁷ Spirit.

22. 'Ye dreary instruments of dolefull sight,
That doe this deadly spectacle behold,
Why doe ye lenger feed on loathed light,
Or liking find to gaze on earthly mould,
Sith cruell fates the carefull threds unfould,
The which my life and love together tyde?
Now let the stony dart of sencelesse cold
Perce to my hart, and pas through everie side,
And let eternall night so sad sight fro me hyde.
23. 'O lightsome day! the lampe of highest Jove,
First made by him mens wandring wayes to guyde,
When darknesse he in deepest dongeon drove,
Henceforth thy hated face for ever hyde,
And shut up heavens windowes shyning wyde;
For earthly sight can nought but sorrow breed,
And late repentance which shall long abyde:
Mine eyes no more on vanitie shall feed,
But seeled up with death shall have their deadly meed.'
24. Then downe againe she fell unto the ground,
But he her quickly reared up againe:
Thrise did she sinke adowne in deadly swownd,
And thrise he her reviv'd with busie paine.
At last when life recover'd had the raine,¹
And over-wrestled his strong enemy,
With foltring tong, and trembling everie vaine,
'Tell on,' (quoth she) 'the wofull Tragedy,
The which these reliques sad present unto mine eye.
25. 'Tempestuous fortune hath spent all her spight,
And thrilling sorrow throwne his utmost dart:
Thy sad tong cannot tell more heavy plight
Then that I fcele, and harbour in mine hart:
Who hath endur'd the whole can beare ech part.
If death it be, it is not the first wound
That launched² hath my brest with bleeding smart.
Begin, and end the bitter balefull³ stound⁴;
If lesse then that I feare, more favour I have found.'

¹ Rein, mastery.² Lanced, pierced.³ Woeful.⁴ Amazement.

26. Then gan the Dwarfe the whole discourse declare;
The subtile traines of Archimago old;
The wanton loves of false Fidessa fayre,
Bought with the blood of vanquisht Paynim bold;
The wretched payre transformd to treën¹ mould;
The house of Pryde, and perilles round about;
The combat which he with Sansjoy did hould;
The lucklesse conflict with the Gyaunt stout,
Wherein captiv'd, of life or death he stood in doubt.
27. She heard with patience all unto the end,
And strove to maister sorrowfull assay,²
Which greater grew the more she did contend,
And almost rent her tender hart in tway³;
And love fresh coles unto her fire did lay;
For greater love, the greater is the losse.
Was never Lady loved dearer day
Then she did love the knight of the Redcrosse,
For whose deare sake so many troubles her did tosse.
28. At last when fervent sorrow slaked was,
She up arose, resolving him to find
Alive or dead; and forward forth doth pas,
All as the Dwarfe the way to her assynd⁴;
And evermore, in constant carefull mind,
She fedd her wound with fresh renewed bale.⁵
Long tost with stormes, and bet with bitter wind,
High over hills, and lowe adowne the dale,
She wandred many a wood, and measurd many a vale.
29. At last she chaunced by good hap to meet
A goodly knight, faire marching by the way,
Together with his Squyre, arayed meet:
His glitterand armour shined far away,
Like glauncing light of Phœbus brightest ray;
From top to toe no place appeared bare,
That deadly dint of steele endanger may.
Athwart his brest a bauldrick⁶ brave he ware,
That shind, like twinkling stars, with stones most pretious
rare.

¹ Of trees. ² Trial, affliction. ³ Twain. ⁴ Pointed out. ⁵ Woe. ⁶ Belt.

30. And in the midst thereof one pretious stone
Of wondrous worth, and eke of wondrous might,
Shapt like a Ladies head, exceeding shone,
Like Hesperus emongst the lesser lights,
And strove for to amaze the weaker sights:
Thereby his mortall blade full comely hong
In yvory sheath, yearv'd with curious slights,¹
Whose hilts were burnisht gold, and handle strong
Of mother perle; and buckled with a golden tong.
31. His haughtie Helmet, horrid² all with gold,
Both glorious brightnesse and great terrour bredd:
For all the crest a Dragon did enfold
With greedie pawes, and over all did spredd
His golden winges: his dreadfull hideous hedd,
Close couched on the bever, seemd to throw
From flaming mouth bright sparckles fiery redd,
That suddeine horreur to faint hartes did show;
And scaly tayle was stretcht adowne his back full low.
32. Upon the top of all his loftie crest,
A bounch of heares discolour'd diversly,
With sprinced pearle and gold full richly drest,
Did shake, and seemd to daunce for jollity,
Like to an almond tree ymounted hye
On top of greene Selinis all alone,
With blossoms brave bedecked daintily;
Whose tender locks do tremble every one
At everie little breath that under heaven is blowne.
33. His warlike shield all closely cover'd was,
Ne might of mortall eye be ever seene;
Not made of steele, nor of enduring bras,
Such earthly mettals soon consumed beene,³
But all of Diamond perfect pure and cleene
It framed was, one massy entire mould,
Hewen out of Adamant rocke with engines keene,
That point of speare it never percen could,
Ne dint of direfull sword divide the substance would.

¹ Devices.² Rough.³ Arc.

34. The same to wight he never wont disclose,
But whenas monsters huge he would dismay,
Or daunt unequall armies of his foes,
Or when the flying heavens he would affray;
For so exceeding shone his glistring ray,
That Phœbus golden face it did attaint,
As when a cloud his beames doth over-lay;
And silver Cynthia waxed pale and faynt,
As when her face is staynd with magicke arts constraint.
35. No magicke arts hereof had any might,
Nor bloody wordes of bold Enchaunters call;
But all that was not such as seemd in sight
Before that shield did fade, and suddeine fall:
And when him list the raskall routes appall,
Men into stones therewith he could transmew,¹
And stones to dust, and dust to nought at all;
And, when him list the prouder lookes subdew,
He would them gazing blind, or turne to other hew.
36. Ne let it seeme that credence this exceedes;
For he that made the same was knowne right well
To have done much more admirable deedes.
It Merlin was, which whylome² did excell
All living wightes in might of magicke spell:
Both shield and sword, and armour all he wrought
For this young Prince, when first to armes he fell³;
But, when he dyde, the Faery Queene it brought
To Faerie lond, where yet it may be seene, if sought:
37. A gentle youth, his dearely loved Squire,
His speare of heben⁴ wood behind him bare,
Whose harmeful head, thrise heated in the fire,
Had riven many a brest with pikehead square:
A goodly person, and could menage faire
His stubborne steed with curbed canon⁵ bitt,
Who under him did trample as the aire,
And chaft that any on his backe should sitt:
The yron rowels into frothy fome he bitt.

¹ Transmute.² Formerly.³ Took up, entered upon.⁴ Ebony.⁵ Curved round bit.

38. Whenas this knight nigh to the Lady drew,
 With lovely court he gan her entertaine;
 But, when he heard her answers loth, he knew
 Some secret sorrow did her heart distraine¹;
 Which to allay, and calme her storming paine,
 Faire feeling words he wisely gan display,
 And for her humor fitting purpose faine,
 To tempt the cause it selfe for to bewray,²
 Wherewith enmovd, these bleeding words she gan to say.
39. 'What worlds delight, or joy of living speach,
 Can hart, so plungd in sea of sorrowes deep,
 And heaped with so huge misfortunes, reach?
 The carefull cold beginneth for to creep,
 And in my heart his yron arrow steep,
 Soone as I thinke upon my bitter bale.
 Such helplesse harmes yts³ better hidden keep,
 Then rip up grieve where it may not availe:
 My last left comfort is my woes to weepe and waile.'
40. 'Ah Lady deare,' quoth then the gentle knight,
 'Well may I ween your grieve is wondrous great;
 For wondrous great grieve groneth in my spright,
 Whiles thus I heare you of your sorrowes treat.
 But, woefull Lady, let me you intrete,
 For to unfold the anguish of your hart:
 Mishaps are maistred by advice discrete,
 And counsell mitigates the greatest smart:
 Found never help who never would his hurts impart.'
41. 'O, but,' (quoth she) 'great grieve will not be tould,
 And can more easily be thought then said.'
 'Right so,' (quoth he) 'but he that never would
 Could never: will to might gives greatest aid.'
 'But grieve,' (quoth she) 'does greater grow displaid,
 If then it find not helpe, and breeds despaire.'
 'Despaire breeds not,' (quoth he) 'where faith is staid.'
 'No faith so fast,' (quoth she) 'but flesh does paire.'⁴
 'Flesh may empaire,' (quoth he) 'but reason can repaire.'

¹ Torment.² Betray, reveal.³ It is.⁴ Impair.

42. His goodly reason, and well-guided speach,
So deepe did settle in her gracious thought,
That her perswaded to disclose the breach
Which love and fortune in her heart had wrought;
And said; 'Faire Sir, I hope good hap hath brought
You to inquere the secrets of my grieve,
Or that your wisdom will direct my thought,
Or that your prowess can me yield reliefe:
Then, heare the story sad, which I shall tell you brieve.
43. 'The forlorne Maiden, whom your eies have seene
The laughing stocke of fortunes mockeries,
Am th' onely daughter of a King and Queene,
Whose parents deare, whiles equal destinies
Did ronne about, and their felicities
The favourable heavens did not envy,
Did spred their rule through all the territories,
Which Phison and Euphrates floweth by,
And Gehons golden waves doe wash continually:
44. 'Till that their cruell cursed enemy,
An huge great Dragon, horrible in sight,
Bred in the loathly lakes of Tartary,
With murderous ravine, and devouring might,
Their kingdome spoild, and countrey wasted quight:
Themselves, for feare into his jawes to fall,
He forst to castle strong to take their flight;
Where, fast embard¹ in mighty brasen wall,
He has them now fowr years besiegd to make them thrall.
45. 'Full many knights, adventurous and stout,
Have enterpriz'd that Monster to subdew:
From every coast that heaven walks about
Have thither come the noble Martial crew,
That famous harde atchievements still pursew;
Yet never any could that girlond win,
But all still shronke, and still he greater grew:
All they, for want of faith, or guilt of sin,
The pitteous pray of his fiers cruelty have bin.

¹ Confined.

46. 'At last, yled with far reported praise,
Which flying fame throughout the world had spred,
Of doughty knights, whom Faery land did raise,
That noble order hight¹ of maidenhed,²
Forthwith to court of Gloriane I sped,
Of Gloriane, great Queene of glory bright,
Whose kingdomes seat Cleopolis is red³;
There to obtaine some such redoubted knight,
That Parents deare from tyrants powre deliver might.
47. 'Yt was my chaunce (my chaunce was faire and good)
There for to find a fresh unproved knight;
Whose manly hands imbrowd in guilty blood
Had never beene, ne ever by his might
Had throwne to ground the unregarded right:
Yet of his prowesse prooffe he since hath made
(I witnes am) in many a cruell fight;
The groning ghosts of many one dismaide
Have felt the bitter dint of his avenging blade.
48. 'And ye, the forlorne reliques of his powre,
His biting sword, and his devouring speare,
Which have endured many a dreadfull stowre,⁴
Can speake his prowesse that did earst you beare,
And well could rule; now he hath left you heare
To be the record of his ruefull losse,
And of my dolefull disaventurous deare.
O! heavie record of the good Redcrosse,
Where have yee left your lord that could so well you tosse?
49. 'Well hoped I, and faire beginnings had,
That he my captive languor should redeeme:
Till, all unweeting, an Enchaunter bad
His sence abusd, and made him to misdeeme
My loyalty, not such as it did seeme,
That rather death desire then such despight.⁵
Be judge, ye heavens, that all things right esteeme,
How I him lov'd, and love with all my might.
So thought I eke of him, and think I thought aright.

¹ Named.² Maidenhood.³ Known.⁴ Conflict.⁵ Aversion.

50. 'Thenceforth me desolate he quite forsooke,
To wander where wilde fortune would me lead,
And other bywaies he himselfe betooke,
Where never foote of living wight did tread,
That brought not backe the balefull body dead:
In which him chaunced false Duessa meete,
Mine onely foe, mine onely deadly dread;
Who with her witchcraft, and misseeming sweete,
Inveigled him to follow her desires unmeete.
51. 'At last, by subtile sleights¹ she him betraid
Unto his foe, a Gyaunt huge and tall;
Who him disarmed, dissolute, dismaid,
Unwares surprised, and with mighty mall²
The monster mercillesse him made to fall,
Whose fall did never foe before behold:
And now in darkesome dungeon, wretched thrall,
Remedillesse for aie he doth him hold.
This is my cause of griefe, more great then may be told.,
52. Ere she had ended all she gan to faint:
But he her comforted and faire bespake:
'Certes,³ Madame, ye have great cause of plaint;
That stoutest heart, I weene, could cause to quake:
But be of cheare, and comfort to you take;
For till I have acquitt⁴ your captive knight,
Assure your selfe I will you not forsake.'
His chearefull words reviv'd her chearelesse spright,
So forth they went, the Dwarfe them guiding ever right.

CANTO VIII

Faire virgin, to redeeme her deare,
Brings Arthure to the fight:
Who slayes the Gyaunt, wounds the beast,
And strips Duessa quight.

1. Ay me! how many perils doe enfold
The righteous man, to make him daily fall,
Were not that heavenly grace doth him uphold,
And stedfast truth acquite him out of all.

¹ Devices.² Club.³ Truly, certainly.⁴ Released.

Her love is firme, her care continuall,
So oft as he, through his own foolish pride
Or weaknes, is to sinfull bands made thrall:
Els should this Redcrosse knight in bands have dyde,
For whose deliverance she this Prince doth thither guyd.

2. They sadly traveild thus, untill they came
Nigh to a castle builded strong and hye:
Then cryde the Dwarfe, 'Lo! yonder is the same,
In which my Lord, my liege, doth lucklesse ly
Thrall to that Gyaunts hatefull tyranny:
Therefore, deare Sir, your mightie powres assay.'
The noble knight alighted by and by
From loftie steed, and badd the Ladie stay,
To see what end of fight should him befall that day.
3. So with his Squire, th' admirer of his might,
He marched forth towardses that castle wall,
Whose gates he fownd fast shutt, ne living wight
To warde the same, nor answere commers call.
Then tooke that Squire an horne of bugle small,
Which hong adowne his side in twisted gold
And tasselles gay. Wyde wonders over all
Of that same hornes great virtues weren told,
Which had approved bene in uses manifold.
4. Was never wight that heard that shrilling sownd,
But trembling feare did feel in every vaine:
Three miles it might be easy heard arownd,
And Ecchoes three aunswer'd it selfe againe:
No false enchauntment, nor deceiptfull traine,
Might once abide the terror of that blast,
But presently was void¹ and wholly vaine:
No gate so strong, no locke so firme and fast,
But with that percing noise flew open quite, or brast.²
5. The same before the Geaunts gate he blew,
That all the castle quaked from the grownd,
And every dore of freewill open flew.
The Gyaunt selfe, dismaied with that sownd,

¹ Useless.² Burst.

Where he with his Duessa dalliaunce fownd,
In hast came rushing forth from inner bowre,
With staring countenance sterne, as one astownd,
And staggering steps, to weet what suddein stowre¹
Had wrought that horror strange, and dar'd his dreaded
powre.

6. And after him the proud Duessa came,
High mounted on her many headed beast,
And every head with fyrie tongue did flame,
And every head was crowned on his creast,
And bloody mouthed with late cruell feast.
That when the knight beheld, his mightie shild
Upon his manly arme he soone addrest,
And at him fiersly flew, with corage fild,
And eger greedinesse through every member thrid.
7. Therewith the Gyant buckled him to fight,
Inflamd with scornefull wrath and high disdaine,
And lifting up his dreadfull club on hight,
All armd with ragged snubbes² and knottie graine,
Him thought at first encounter to have slaine.
But wise and wary was that noble Pere;
And, lightly leaping from so monstrous maine,³
Did fayre avoide the violence him nere:
It booted nought to thinke such thunderbolts to beare.
8. Ne shame he thought to shonne so hideous might:
The ydle stroke, enforcing furious way,
Missing the marke of his misaymed sight,
Did fall to ground, and with his heavy sway
So deeply dinted in the driven clay,
That three yardes deepe a furrow up did throw.
The sad earth, wounded with so sore assay,
Did grone full grievous underneath the blow,
And trembling with strange feare did like an erthquake
show:
9. As when almightie Jove, in wrathfull mood,
To wreake the guilt of mortall sins is bent,

¹ Confusion, conflict.² Snags.³ Force.

Hurles forth his thundring dart with deadly food
Enrold in flames, and smouldring dreriment,¹
Through riven cloudes and molten firmament;
The fiers threeforked engin, making way,
Both loftie towres and highest trees hath rent,
And all that might his angry passage stay;
And, shooting in the earth, castes up a mount of clay.

10. His boystrous² club, so buried in the grownd,
He could not rearen up againe so light,
But that the Knight him at advantage fownd;
And, whiles he strove his combred clubbe to quight
Out of the earth, with blade all burning bright
He smott off his left arme, which like a block
Did fall to ground, depriv'd of native might:
Large streames of blood out of the truncked stock
Forth gushed, like fresh water streame from riven rocke.
11. Dismayed with so desperate deadly wound,
And eke impatient of unwonted payne,
He loudly brayd with beastly yelling sownd,
That all the fieldes rebellowed againe.
As great a noyse, as when in Cymbrian plaine
An heard of Bulles, whom kindly rage doth sting,
Doe for the milky mothers want complaine,
And fill the fieldes with troublous bellowing:
The neighbor woods arownd with hollow murmur ring.
12. That when his deare Duessa heard, and saw
The evil stownd³ that daungerd her estate,
Unto his aide she hastily did draw
Her dreadfull beast; who, swolne with blood of late,
Came ramping⁴ forth with proud presumptuous gate,
And threatned all his heades like flaming brandes.
But him the Squire made quickly to retrate,
Encountring fiers with single sword in hand;
And twixt him and his Lord did like a bulwarke
stand.

¹ Grief.² Big.³ Astonishment, amazement.⁴ Springing.

13. The proud Duessa, full of wrathfull spight,
And fiers disdaine to be affronted so,
Enforst her purple beast with all her might,
That stop out of the way to overthroe,
Scorning the let¹ of so unequall foe:
But nathemore² would that corageous swayne
To her yeeld passage gainst his Lord to goe,
But with outrageous strokes did him restraine,
And with his body bard the way atwixt them twaine.
14. Then tooke the angrie witch her golden cup,
Which still she bore, replete with magick artes;
Death and despeyre did many thereof sup,
And secret poyson through their inner partes,
Th' eternall bale of heaveie wounded harts:
Which, after charmes and some enchauntments said,
She lightly sprinkled on his weaker partes:
Therewith his sturdie corage soon was quayd,³
And all his sences were with suddein dread dismayd.
15. So downe he fell before the cruell beast,
Who on his neck his bloody clawes did seize,
That life nigh crusht out of his panting brest:
No powre he had to stirre, nor will to rize.
That when the carefull knight gan well advise,⁴
He lightly left the foe with whom he fought,
And to the beast gan turne his enterprise⁵;
For wondrous anguish in his hart it wrought,
To see his loved Squyre into such thraldom brought:
16. And, high advauncing his blood-thirstie blade,
Stroke one of those deformed heades so sore,
That of his puissaunce proud ensample made:
His monstrous scalpe downe to his teeth it tore,
And that misformed shape misshaped more.
A sea of blood gusht from the gaping wownd,
That her gay garments staynd with filthy gore,
And overflowed all the field arownd,
That over shoes in blood he waded on the grownd.

¹ Hindrance. ² Not the more. ³ Quailed. ⁴ Perceive. ⁵ Energy.

17. Thereat he rored for exceeding paine,
That to have heard great horror would have bred;
And scourging th' emptie ayre with his long trayne,
Through great impatience of his grieved hed,
His gorgeous ryder from her loftie sted
Would have cast downe, and trodd in durty myre,
Had not the Gyaunt soone her succoured;
Who, all enrag'd with smart and frantick yre,
Came hurtling¹ in full fiers, and forst the knight retyre.
18. The force, which wont in two to be disperst,
In one alone left hand he now unites,
Which is through rage more strong then both were erst;
With which his hideous club aloft he dites,²
And at his foe with furious rigor smites,
That strongest Oake might seeme to overthrow.
The stroke upon his shield so heavie lites,
That to the ground it doubleth him full low:
What mortall wight could ever beare so monstrous blow?
19. And in his fall his shield, that covered was,
Did loose his vele by chaunce, and open flew;
The light whereof, that heavens light did pas,
Such blazing brightnesse through the ayer threw,
That eye mote not the same endure to vew.
Which when the Gyaunt spyde with staring eye,
He downe let fall his arme, and soft withdrew
His weapon huge, that heaved was on hye
For to have slain the man, that on the ground did lye.
20. And eke the fruitfull-headed beast, amazd
At flashing beames of that sunshiny shield,
Became stark blind, and all his sences dazd,
That downe he tumbled on the durtie field,
And seemd himselfe as conquered to yield.
Whom when his maistresse proud perceiv'd to fall,
Whiles yet his feeble feet for faintnesse reeld,
Unto the Gyaunt lowdly she gan call;
'O! helpe, Orgoglio; helpe! or els we perish all.'

¹ Rushing headlong.² Prepares, raises.

21. At her so pitteous cry was much amooov'd
Her champion stout; and for to ayde his frend,
Againe his wonted angry weapon proov'd,
But all in vaine, for he has redd his end
In that bright shield, and all their forces spend
Them selves in vaine: for, since that glauncing sight,
He hath no powre to hurt, nor to defend.
As where th' Almightyes lightning brond¹ does light,
It dimmes the dazed eyen, and daunts the sences quight.
22. Whom when the Prince, to batteill new addrest
And threatning high his dreadfull stroke, did see,
His sparkling blade about his head he blest,²
And smote off quite his right leg by the knee,
That downe he tombled; as an aged tree,
High growing on the top of rocky clift,
Whose hartstrings with keene steele nigh hewen be;
The mightie trunck, halfe rent with ragged rift,
Doth roll adowne the rocks, and fall with fearefull drift.
23. Or as a Castle, reared high and round,
By subtile engins and malicious slight³
Is undermined from the lowest ground,
And her foundation forst, and feebled quight,
At last downe falles; and with her heaped hight
Her hastie ruine does more heavie make,
And yields it selfe unto the victours might.
Such was this Gyaunts fall, that seemd to shake
The stedfast globe of earth, as it for feare did quake.
24. The knight, then lightly leaping to the pray,
With mortall steele him smot againe so sore,
That headlesse his unweldy bodie lay,
All wallowd in his owne fowle bloody gore,
Which flowed from his wounds in wondrous store.
But, soone as breath out of his brest did pas,
That huge great body, which the Gyaunt bore,
Was vanisht quite; and of that monstrous mas
Was nothing left, but like an emptie blader was.

¹ Brand.² Brandish.³ Device.

25. Whose grievous fall when false Duessa spyde,
Her golden cup she cast unto the ground,
And crowned mitre rudely threw asyde:
Such percing grieve her stubborne hart did wound,
That she could not endure that dolefull stound,
But leaving all behind her fled away:
The light-foot Squyre her quickly turnd around,
And, by hard meanes enforcing her to stay,
So brought unto his Lord as his deserved pray.
26. The roiall Virgin which beheld from farre,
In pensive plight and sad perplexitie,
The whole atchievement of this doubtfull warre.
Came running fast to greet his victorie,
With sober gladnesse and myld modestie;
And with sweet joyous cheare him thus bespake:
'Fayre braunch of noblesse, flowre of chevalrie,
That with your worth the world amazed make,
How shall I quite the paynes ye suffer for my sake?
27. 'And you, fresh budd of vertue springing fast,
Whom these sad eyes saw nigh unto deaths dore,
What hath poore Virgin for such perill past
Wherewith you to reward? Accept therefore
My simple selfe, and service evermore:
And he that high does sit, and all things see
With equall eye, their merites to restore,
Behold what ye this day have done for mee,
And what I cannot quite requite with usuree.
28. 'But sith¹ the heavens, and your faire handeling,
Have made you master of the field this day,
Your fortune maister eke with governing,
And, well begonne, end all so well, I pray!
Ne let that wicked woman scape away;
For she it is, that did my Lord bethrall,
My dearest Lord, and deepe in dongeon lay,
Where he his better dayes hath wasted all:
O heare, how piteous he to you for ayd does call!

¹ Since.

29. Forthwith he gave in charge unto his Squyre,
That scarlot whore to keepen carefully;
Whyles he himselfe with greedie great desyre
Into the Castle entred forcibly,
Where living creature none he did espye.
Then gan he lowdly through the house to call;
But no man car'd to answeere to his crye:
There raignd a solemne silence over all;
Nor voice was heard, nor wight was seene in bowre or hall.
30. At last, with creeping crooked pace forth came
An old old man, with beard as white as snow,
That on a staffe his feeble steps did frame,
And guyde his wearie gate both too and fro,
For his eye sight him fayled long ygo;
And on his arme a bounch of keyes he bore,
The which unused rust did overgrow:
Those were the keyes of every inner dore;
But he could not them use, but kept them still in store.
31. But very uncouth sight was to behold,
How he did fashion his untoward¹ pace;
For as he forward moovd his footing old,
So backward still was turnd his wrinckled face:
Unlike to men, who ever, as they trace,
Both feet and face one way are wont to lead.
This was the auncient keeper of that place,
And foster father of the Gyaunt dead;
His name Ignaro did his nature right aread.²
32. His reverend heares and holy gravitee
The knight much honord, as beseemed well;
And gently askt, where all the people bee,
Which in that stately building wont to dwell:
Who answerd him full soft, *he could not tell*.
Again he askt, where that same knight was layd,
Whom great Orgoglio with his puissaunce fell
Had made his caytive thrall: againe he sayde,
He could not tell: ne ever other answeere made.

¹ Uncouth.² Tell, express.

33. Then asked he, which way he in might pas?
He could not tell, againe he answered. *
Thereat the courteous knight displeased was,
And said; 'Old syre, it seemes thou hast not red
How ill it sits with that same silver hed,
In vaine to mocke, or mockt in vaine to bee
But if thou be, as thou art pourtrahed
With natures pen, in ages grave degree,
Aread in graver wise what I demaund of thee.
34. His answer likewise was, *he could not tell*:
Whose sencelesse speach, and doted ignorance,
Whenas the noble Prince had marked well,
He ghest his nature by his countenance,
And calmd his wrath with goodly temperance.
Then, to him stepping, from his arme did reach
Those keyes, and made himselfe free entrance.
Each dore he opened without any breach¹;
There was no barre to stop, nor foe him to empeach.²
35. There all within full rich arayd he found,
With royall arras, and resplendent gold,
And did with store of every thing abound,
That greatest Princes presence might behold.
But all the floore (too filthy to be told)
With blood of guiltlesse babes, and innocents trew,
Which there were slaine as sheepe out of the fold,
Defiled was, that dreadfull was to vew;
And sacred ashes over it was strowed new.
36. And there beside of marble stone was built
An Altare, carv'd with cunning ymagery,
On which trew Christians blood was often spilt,
And holy Martyres often doen³ to dye
With cruell malice and strong tyranny:
Whose blessed sprites, from underneath the stone,
To God for vengeance cryde continually;
And with great griefe were often heard to grone,
That hardest heart would bleede to hear their piteous mone.

¹ Quarrel, trouble.² Hinder.³ Made, compelled.

37. Through every rowme he sought, and everie bowr,
But no where could he find that wofull thrall:
At last he came unto an yron doore,
That fast was lockt, but key found not at all
Emongst that bounch to open it withall;
But in the same a little grate was pight,¹
Through which he sent his voyce, and lowd did call
With all his powre, to weet if living wight
Were housed therewithin, whom he enlargen might.
38. Therewith an hollow, dreary, murmuring voyce
These piteous plaintes and dolours did resound:
'O! who is that, which bringes me happy choyce
Of death, that here lye dying every stound,²
Yet live perforce in balefull darkenesse bound?
For now three Moones have changed thrice their hew,
And have been thrice hid underneath the ground,
Since I the heavens chearefull face did vew.
O! welcome thou, that doest of death bring tydings trew.'
39. Which when that Champion heard, with percing point
Of pittie deare his hart was thrilled sore;
And trembling horror ran through every joynt,
For ruth of gentle knight so fowle forlore³:
Which shaking off, he rent that yron dore
With furious force and indignation fell;
Where entred in, his foot could find no flore,
But all a deepe descent, as darke as hell,
That breathed ever forth a filthie banefull smell.
40. But nether darkenesse fowle, nor filthy bands,
Nor noyous⁴ smell, his purpose could withhold,
(Entire affection hateth nicer⁵ hands)
But that with constant zeles and corage bold,
After long paines and labors manifold,
He found the meanes that Prisoner up to reare;
Whose feeble thighes, unable to uphold
His pined corse, him scarce to light could beare;
A ruefull spectacle of death and ghastly dreere.⁶

¹ Fixed.⁴ Annoying.² Moment.⁵ Too fastidious.³ Forlorn, abandoned.⁶ Grief.

41. His sad dull eies, deepe sunck in hollow pits,
Could not endure th' unwonted sunne to view;
His bare thin cheekes for want of better bits,¹
And empty sides deceived of their dew,
Could make a stony hart his hap to rew;
His rawbone armes, whose mighty brawned bowrs²
Were wont to rive steele plates, and helmets hew,
Were clene consum'd; and all his vitall powres
Decayd, and al his flesh shronk up like withered flowres.
42. Whome when his Lady saw, to him she ran
With hasty joy: to see him made her glad,
And sad to view his visage pale and wan,
Who earst in flowres of freshest youth was clad.
Tho, when her well of teares she wasted had,
She said; 'Ah dearest Lord! what evill starre
On you hath frownd, and poured his influence bad,
That of your selfe ye thus berobbed arre,
And this misseeming hew your manly looks doth marre?
43. 'But welcome now, my Lord in wele or woe,
Whose presence I have lackt too long a day:
And fie on Fortune, mine avowed foe,
Whose wrathful wreakes³ them selves doe now alay;
And for these wronges shall treble penaunce pay
Of treble good: good growes of evils priefe.⁴'
The chearelesse man, whom sorrow did dismay,
Had no delight to treaten of his grieve;
His long endured famine needed more reliefe.
44. 'Faire Lady,' then said that victorious knight,
'The things, that grievous were to doe, or beare,
Them to renew, I wote, breeds no delight;
Best musicke breeds delight in loathing eare:
But th' only good that growes of passed feare
Is to be wise, and ware of like agein.
This daies ensample hath this lesson deare
Deepe written in my heart with yron pen,
That blisse may not abide in state of mortall men.

¹ Food.² Muscles.³ Revenges.⁴ Proof, test.

45. 'Henceforth, Sir knight, take to you wonted strength,
 And maister these mishaps with patient might.
 Loe! where your foe lies strecht in monstrous length;
 And loe! that wicked woman in your sight,
 The roote of all your care and wretched plight,
 Now in your powre, to let her live, or die.'
 'To doe¹ her die,' (quoth Una) 'were despight,
 And shame t'avenge so weake an enemy;
 But spoile her of her scarlot robe, and let her fly.'

CANTO IX

His loves and lignage Arthure tells:
 The knights knitt friendly bands:
 Sir Trevisan flies from Despeyre,
 Whom Redcros knight withstands.

* * * * *

20. Thus beene² they parted; Arthur on his way
 To seeke his love, and th' other for to fight
 With Unaes foe, that all her realme did pray.
 But she, now weighing the decayed plight
 And shrunk synewes of her chosen knight,
 Would not a while her forward course pursew,
 Ne bring him forth in face of dreadfull fight,
 Till he recovered had his former hew;
 For him to be yet weake and wearie well she knew.
21. So as they traveild, lo! they gan espy
 An armed knight towards them gallop fast,
 That seemed from some feared foe to fly,
 Or other griesly thing that him aghast.³
 Still as he fledd his eye was backward cast,
 As if his feare still followed him behynd:
 Als⁴ flew his steed as he his bandes had brast,⁵
 And with his winged heeles did tread the wynd,
 As he had beene a fole of Pegasus his kynd.

¹ Make, compel.² Are.³ Terrified.⁴ So.⁵ Burst.

22. Nigh as he drew, they might perceive his head
 To bee unarmd, and curld uncombed heares
 Upstaring stiffe, dismaid with uncouth dread:
 Nor drop of blood in all his face appeares,
 Nor life in limbe; and, to increase his feares,
 In fowle reproch of knighthoodes fayre degree,
 About his neck an hempen rope he weares,
 That with his glistring armes does ill agree;
 But he of rope or armes has now no memoree.
23. The Redcrosse knight toward him crossed fast,
 To weet what mister¹ wight was so dismayd.
 There him he findes all sencelesse and aghast,
 That of him selfe he seemd to be afrayd;
 Whom hardly he from flying forward stayd,
 Till he these wordes to him deliver might:
 'Sir knight, aread who hath ye thus arayd,²
 And eke from whom make ye this hasty flight?
 For never knight I saw in such misseeming plight.'
24. He answerd nought at all; but adding new
 Feare to his first amazment, staring wyde
 With stony eyes and hartlesse hollow hew,
 Astonisht stood, as one that had aspyde
 Infernall furies with their chaines untyde.
 Him yett againe, and yett againe, bespake
 The gentle knight; who nought to him replyde;
 But, trembling every joynt, did inly quake,
 And foltring tongue, at last, these words seemd forth to
 shake;
25. 'For Gods deare love, Sir knight, doe³ me not stay;
 For loe! he comes, he comes fast after mee.'
 Eft looking back would faine have runne away;
 But he him forst to stay, and tellen free
 The secrete cause of his perplexitie:
 Yet nathemore⁴ by his bold hartie speach
 Could his blood frosen hart emboldened bee,
 But through his boldnes rather feare did reach;
 Yett, forst, at last he made through silence suddein breach.

¹ Kind of.² Adorned (with the hempen rope).³ Make, compel.⁴ Not the more.

26. 'And am I now in safetie sure,' (quoth he)
'From him that would have forced me to dye?
And is the point of death now turnd fro mee,
That I may tell this haplesse history?'
'Fear nought,' (quoth he) 'no daunger now is nye.'
'Then shall I you recount a ruefull cace,'
(Said he) 'the which with this unlucky eye
I late beheld; and, had not greater grace
Me reft from it, had bene partaker of the place.
27. 'I lately chaunst (Would I had never chaunst!)
With a fayre knight to keepen companee,
Sir Terwin hight, that well himselfe advaunst
In all affayres, and was both bold and free;
But not so happy as mote happy bee:
He lov'd, as was his lot, a Lady gent,¹
That him againe lov'd in the least degree;
For she was proud, and of too high intent,
And joyd to see her lover languish and lament:
28. 'From whom retourning sad and comfortlesse,
As on the way together we did fare,
We met that villen, (God from him me blesse!)
That cursed wight, from whom I scapt whyleare,²
A man of hell that calls himselfe Despayre:
Who first us greets, and after fayre areedes
Of tydinges straunge, and of adventures rare:
So creeping close, as Snake in hidden weedes,
Inquireth of our states, and of our knightly deedes.
29. 'Which when he knew, and felt our feeble harts
Embostr³ with bale, and bitter byting grieve,
Which love had launched with his deadly darts,
With wounding words, and termes of foule reprieve,⁴
He pluckt from us all hope of dew reliefe,
That earst us held in love of lingring life;
Then hopelesse, hartlesse, gan the cunning thiefe
Perswade us dye, to stint all further strife:
To me he lent this rope, to him a rusty knife.

¹ Gentle² A while ago.³ Worn out.⁴ Reproof.

30. 'With which sad instrument of hasty death,
That wofull lover, loathing lenger light,
A wyde way made to let forth living breath:
But I, more fearefull or more lucky wight,
Dismayd with that deformed dismall sight,
Fledd fast away, halfe dead with dying feare;
Ne yet assur'd of life by you, Sir knight,
Whose like infirmity like chaunce may beare;
But God you never let his charmed speeches heare!'
31. 'How may a man,' (said he) 'with idle speach
Be wonne to spoyle the Castle of his health?'
'I wote,' (quoth he) 'whom tryall late did teach,
That like would not for all this worldes wealth.
His subtile tong like dropping honny mealt'h
Into the heart, and searcheth every vaine;
That, ere one be aware, by secret stealth
His powre is reft, and weaknes doth remaine.
O! never, Sir, desire to try his guilefull traine.'
32. 'Certes,' (sayd he) 'hence shall I never rest,
Till I that treachours art have heard and tryde:
And you, Sir knight, whose name mote I request,
Of grace do me unto his cabin guyde.'
'I, that hight¹ Trevisan,' (quoth he) 'will ryde
Against my liking backe to doe you grace:
But nor for gold nor glee² will I abyde
By you, when ye arrive in that same place;
For lever had I die then see his deadly face.'
33. Ere long they come where that same wicked wight
His dwelling has, low in an hollow cave,
For underneath a cragy cliff ypight,
Darke, dolefull, dreary, like a greedy grave,
That still for carrion carcasses doth crave:
On top whereof ay dwelt the ghastly Owle,
Shrieking his balefull note, which ever drave
Far from that haunt all other chearefull fowle;
And all about it wandring ghostes did wayle and howle.

¹ Am called.² Pleasure.

34. And all about old stockes and stubs of trees,
Whereon nor fruit nor leafe was ever seene,
Did hang upon the ragged rocky knees;
On which had many wretches hanged beene,
Whose carcasses were scattred on the greene,
And throwne about the cliffs. Arrived there,
That bare-head knight, for dread and dolefull teene,
Would faine have fled, ne durst approchen neare;
But th' other forst him staye, and comforted in feare.
35. That darksome cave they enter, where they find
That cursed man, low sitting on the ground,
Musing full sadly in his sullein mind:
His griesie lockes, long growen and unbound,
Disordred hong about his shoulders round,
And hid his face, through which his hollow eyne
Lookt deadly dull, and stared as astound;
His raw-bone cheekes, through penurie and pine,
Were shronke into his jawes, as he did never dyne.
36. His garment, nought but many ragged clouts,
With thornes together pind and patched was,
The which his naked sides he wrapt abouts;
And him beside there lay upon the gras
A dreary corse, whose life away did pas,
All wallowd in his own yet luke-warme blood,
That from his wound yet welled fresh, alas!
In which a rusty knife fast fixed stood,
And made an open passage for the gushing flood.
37. Which piteous spectacle, approving trew
The wofull tale that Trevisan had told,
Whenas the gentle Redecrosse knight did vew,
With firie zeale he burnt in courage bold
Him to avenge before his blood were cold,
And to the villein sayd; 'Thou damned wight,
The authour of this fact we here behold,
What justice can but judge against thee right,
With thine owne blood to price his blood, here shed in
sight?'

38. 'What franticke fit,' (quoth he) 'hath thus distraught
Thee, foolish man, so rash a doome to give?
What justice ever other judgement taught,
But he should dye who merites not to live?
None els to death this man despayring drive
But his owne guiltie mind, deserving death.
Is then unjust to each his dew to give?
Or let him dye, that loatheth living breath,
Or let him die at ease, that liveth here uneath¹?
39. 'Who travailes by the wearie wandring way,
To come unto his wished home in haste,
And meetes a flood that doth his passage stay,
Is not great grace to helpe him over past,
Or free his feet that in the myre sticke fast?
Most envious man, that grieves at neighbours good;
And fond,² that joyest in the woe thou hast!
Why wilt not let him passe, that long hath stood
Upon the bancke, yet wilt thy selfe not pas the flood?
40. 'He there does now enjoy eternall rest
And happy ease, which thou doest want and crave,
And further from it daily wanderest:
What if some little payne the passage have,
That makes frayle flesh to feare the bitter wave,
Is not short payne well borne, that bringes long ease,
And layes the soule to sleepe in quiet grave?
Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please.'
41. The knight much wondred at his suddeine wit,
And sayd; 'The terme of life is limited,
Ne may a man prolong, nor shorten, it:
The souldier may not move from watchfull sted³,
Nor leave his stand untill his Captaine bed.'
'Who life did limit by almightie doome,'
(Quoth he) 'knowes best the termes established;
And he, that points the Centonell his roome,
Doth license him depart at sound of morning droome.'

¹ With difficulty.² Foolish.³ Place.

42. 'Is not his deed, what ever thing is donne
In heaven and earth? Did not he all create
To die againe? All ends that was begonne:
Their times in his eternall booke of fate
Are written sure, and have their certein date.
Who then can strive with strong necessitie,
That holds the world in his still chaunging state,
Or shunne the death ordaynd by destinie?
When houre of death is come, let none aske whence, nor
why.
43. 'The lenger life, I wote, the greater sin;
The greater sin, the greater punishment:
All those great battels, which thou boasts to win
Through strife, and blood-shed, and avengement,
Now praysd, hereafter deare thou shalt repent;
For life must life, and blood must blood, repay.
Is not enough thy evill life forespent?
For he that once hath missed the right way,
The further he doth goe, the further he doth stray.
44. 'Then doe no further goe, no further stray,
But here ly downe, and to thy rest betake,
Th' ill to prevent, that life ensewen may;
For what hath life that may it loved make,
And gives not rather cause it to forsake?
Feare, sicknesse, age, losse, labour, sorrow, strife,
Payne, hunger, cold that makes the hart to quake,
And ever fickle fortune rageth rife;
All which, and thousands mo,¹ do make a loathsome life.
45. 'Thou, wretched man, of death hast greatest need,
If in true ballaunce thou wilt weigh thy state;
For never knight, that dared warlike deed,
More luckless dissaventures did amate²:
Witnes the dungeon deepe, wherein of late
Thy life shutt up for death so oft did call;
And though good lucke prolonged hath thy date,
Yet death then would the like mishaps forestall,
Into the which hereafter thou maist happen fall.

¹ More.² Check, confound.

46. 'Why then doest thou, O man of sin! desire
To draw thy dayes forth to their last degree?
Is not the measure of thy sinfull hire
High heaped up with huge iniquitee,
Against the day of wrath to burden thee?
Is not enough, that to this Lady mild
Thou falsed hast thy faith with perjuree,
And sold thy selfe to serve Duessa vild,
With whom in al abuse thou hast thy selfe defild?
47. 'Is not he just, that all this doth behold
From highest heven, and beares an equall eie?
Shall he thy sins up in his knowledge fold,
And guilty be of thine impietie?
Is not his lawe, Let every sinner die;
Die shall all flesh? What then must needs be donne,
Is it not better to doe willinglie,
Then linger till the glas be all out ronne?
Death is the end of woes: die soone, O faeries sonne!'
48. The knight was much enmoued with his speach,
That as a sword poynt through his hart did perse,
And in his conscience made a secrete breach,
Well knowing trew all that he did reherse,
And to his fresh remembraunce did reverse
The ugly vew of his deformed crimes;
That all his manly powres it did disperse,
As he were charmed with inchaunted rimes;
That oftentimes he quakt, and fainted oftentimes.
49. In which amazement when the Miscreant
Perceived him to waver, weake and fraile,
Whiles trembling horror did his conscience daunt,
And hellish anguish did his soule assaile;
To drive him to despaire, and quite to quaile,
Hee shewd him, painted in a table plaine,
The damned ghosts that doe in torments waile,
And thousand feends that doe them endlesse paine
With fire and brimstone, which for ever shall remaine.

50. The sight whereof so throughly him dismaid,
That nought but death before his eies he saw,
And ever burning wrath before him laid,
By righteous sentence of th' Almightyes law.
Then gan the villein him to overcraw,¹
And brought unto him swords, ropes, poison, fire,
And all that might him to perdition draw;
And bad him choose what death he would desire;
For death was dew to him that had provokt Gods ire.
51. But, whenas none of them he saw him take,
He to him raught a dagger sharpe and keene,
And gave it him in hand: his hand did quake
And tremble like a leafe of Aspin greene,
And troubled blood through his pale face was seene
To come and goe with tidings from the heart,
As it a ronning messenger had beene.
At last, resolv'd to work his finall smart,
He lifted up his hand, that backe againe did start.
52. Which whenas Una saw, through every vaine
The crudled² cold ran to her well of life,
As in a swowne: but, soone reliv'd³ againe,
Out of his hand she snatcht the cursed knife,
And threw it to the ground, enraged rife,⁴
And to him said; 'Fie, fie, faint hearted Knight!
What meanest thou by this reprochfull strife?
Is this the battaile which thou vauntst to fight
With that fire-mouthed Dragon, horrible and bright?
53. 'Come; come away, fraile, feeble, fleshly wight,
Ne let vaine words bewitch thy manly hart,
Ne divelish thoughts dismay thy constant spright:
In heavenly mercies hast thou not a part?
Why shouldst thou then despeire, that chosen art?
Where justice growes, there grows eke greater grace,
The which doth quench the brond⁵ of hellish smart,
And that accurst hand-writing doth deface.
Arise, sir Knight; arise, and leave this cursed place.'

¹ Triumph over.⁴ Exceedingly.² Curdled.⁵ Brand.³ Revived.

54. So up he rose, and thence amounted streight.
 Which when the carle¹ beheld, and saw his guest
 Would safe depart, for all his subtile sleight,
 He chose an halter from among the rest,
 And with it hong him selfe, unbid, unblest.
 But death he could not worke himselfe thereby;
 For thousand times he so him selfe had drest,
 Yet nathelesse² it could not doe him die,
 Till he should die his last, that is, eternally.

CANTO XI

The knight with that old Dragon fights
 Two days incessantly:
 The third him overthrowes, and gayns
 Most glorious victory.

1. HIGH time now gan it wex for Una fayre
 To thinke of those her captive Parents deare,
 And their forwasted kingdom to repayre:
 Whereto whenas they now approached neare,
 With hartie wordes her knight she gan to cheare,
 And in her modest maner thus bespake:
 'Deare knight, as deare as ever knight was deare,
 That all these sorrowes suffer for my sake,
 High heven behold the tedious toyle ye for me take!
2. 'Now are we come unto my native soyle.
 And to the place where all our perilles dwell;
 Here hauntes that feend, and does his dayly spoyle;
 Therefore, henceforth, bee at your keeping³ well,
 And ever ready for your foeman fell:
 The sparke of noble corage now awake,
 And strive your excellent selfe to excell:
 That shall ye evermore renowned make
 Above all knights on earth, that batteill undertake.'
3. And pointing forth, 'Lo! yonder is,' (said she)
 'The brasen towre, in which my parents deare
 For dread of that huge feend emprisond be;
 Whom I from far see on the walles appeare,

¹ Churl.² Not the less.³ Guard.

Whose sight my feeble soule doth greatly cheare:
And on the top of all I do espye
The watchman wayting tydings glad to heare;
That, (O my Parents!) might I happily
Unto you bring, to ease you of your misery!'

4. With that they heard a roaring hideous sownd,
That all the ayre with terror filled wyde,
And seemd uneath¹ to shake the stedfast ground.
Eftsoones that dreadful Dragon they espyde,
Where stretcht he lay upon the sunny side
Of a great hill, himselfe like a great hill:
But, all so soone as he from far descryde
Those glistring armes that heven with light did fill,
He rousd himselfe full blyth, and hastned them untill.²
5. Then badd the knight his Lady yede³ aloof,
And to an hill herselfe withdraw asyde;
From whence she might behold that battailles proof,
And eke be safe from daunger far descryde.
She him obayd, and turnd a little wyde.⁴
Now, O thou sacred Muse! most learned Dame.
Fayre ympe⁵ of Phœbus and his aged bryde,
The Nourse of time and everlasting fame,
That warlike handes ennoblest with immortall name;
6. O! gently come into my feeble brest;
Come gently, but not with that mightie rage,
Wherewith the martiall troupes thou doest infest,
And hartes of great Heroës doest enrage,
That nought their kindled corage may aswage:
Soone as thy dreadfull trompe begins to sownd,
The God of warre with his fiers equipage
Thou doest awake, sleepe never he so sownd;
And scared nations doest with horror sterne astownd.
7. Fayre Goddesses, lay that furious fitt asyde,
Till I of warres and bloody Mars doe sing,
And Bryton fieldes with Sarazin blood bedyde,
Twixt that great faery Queene and Paynim king,

¹ Almost.² Unto.³ Go.⁴ Aside.⁵ Child.

That with their horror heven and earth did ring;
A worke of labour long, and endlesse prayse:
But now a while lett downe that haughtie string,
And to my tunes thy second tenor rayse,
That I this man of God his godly armes may blaze.¹

8. By this, the dreadful Beast drew nigh to hand,
Halfe flying and halfe footing in his haste,
That with his largenesse measured much land,
And made wide shadow under his huge waste,
As mountaine doth the valley overcaste.
Approching nigh, he reared high afore
His body monstrous, horrible, and vaste;
Which, to increase his wondrous greatnes more,
Was swoln with wrath and poyson, and with bloody gore;
9. And over all with brasen scales was armd,
Like plated cote of steele, so couched neare
That nought mote perce; ne might his corse bee harmd
With dint of swerd, nor push of pointed speare:
Which as an Eagle, seeing pray appeare,
His aery plumes doth rouze, full rudely dight;
So shaked he, that horror was to heare:
For as the clashing of an Armor bright,
Such noyse his rouzed scales did send unto the knight.
10. His flaggy winges, when forth he did display,
Were like two sayles, in which the hollow wynd
Is gathered full, and worketh speedy way:
And eke the pennes,² that did his pineons bynd,
Were like mayne-yardes with flying canvas lynd;
With which whenas him list the ayre to beat,
And there by force unwonted passage fynd,
The cloudes before him fledd for terror great,
And all the hevens stood still amazed with his threat.
11. His huge long tayle, wownd up in hundred foldes,
Does overspred his long bras-scaly back,
Whose wreathed boughtes³ when ever he unfolds,
And thick entangled knots adown does slack,

¹ Proclaim.² Feathers.³ Loops.

Bespotted as with shieldes of red and blacke,
It sweepeth all the land behind him farre,
And of three furlongs does but litle lacke;
And at the point two stinges in fixed arre,
Both deadly sharp, that sharpest steele exceeden farre.

12. But stinges and sharpest steele did far exceed
The sharpnesse of his cruel rending clawes:
Dead was it sure, as sure as death in deed,
What ever thing does touch his ravenous pawes,
Or what within his reach he ever drawes.
But his most hideous head my tongue to tell
Does tremble; for his deepe devouring jawes
Wyde gaped, like the griesly mouth of hell,
Through which into his darke abysses all ravin¹ fell.
13. And, that more wondrous was, in either jaw
Three ranckes of yron teeth enraunged were,
In which yett trickling blood, and gobbets raw,
Of late devoured bodies did appeare,
That sight therof bredd cold congealed feare;
Which to increase, and all atonce to kill,
A cloud of smothering smoke, and sulphure seare,²
Out of his stinking gorge forth steemed still,
That all the ayre about with smoke and stench did fill.
14. His blazing eyes, like two bright shining shieldes,
Did burne with wrath, and sparkled living fyre:
As two broad Beacons, sett in open fieldes,
Send forth their flames far off to every shyre,
And warning give that enimies conspyre
With fire and sword the region to invade:
So flam'd his eyne with rage and rancorous yre;
But far within, as in a hollow glade,
Those glaring lampes were sett that made a dreadfull shade.
15. So dreadfully he towardses him did pas,
Forelifiting up a-loft his speckled brest,
And often bounding on the brused gras,
As for great joyance of his newcome guest.

¹ Plunder.² Burning.

Eftsoones he gan advance his haughty crest,
As chauffed Bore his bristles doth upreare;
And shoke his scales to battaile ready drest,
That made the Redcrosse knight nigh quake for feare,
As bidding bold defyaunce to his foeman neare.

16. The knight gan fayrely couch his steady speare,
And fiersely ran at him with rigorous might:
The pointed steele, arriving rudely theare,
His harder hyde would nether perce nor bight,
But, glauncing by, foorth passed forward right.
Yet sore amoved with so puissaunt push,
The wrathfull beast about him turned light,
And him so rudely, passing by, did brush
With his long taylor, that horse and man to ground did rush.
17. Both horse and man up lightly rose againe,
And fresh encounter towards him addrest;
But th' ydle stroke yet backe recoyld in vaine,
And found no place his deadly point to rest.
Exceeding rage enflam'd the furious Beast,
To be avenged of so great despight;
For never felt his imperceable brest
So wondrous force from hand of living wight;
Yet had he prov'd the powre of many a puissant knight.
18. Then, with his waving wings displayed wyde,
Himselfe up high he lifted from the ground,
And with strong flight did forcibly divyde
The yielding ayre, which nigh too feeble found
Her flitting¹ parts, and element unsound,
To beare so great a weight: he, cutting way
With his broad sayles, about him soared round;
At last, low stouping with unweldy sway,
Snatcht up both horse and man, to beare them quite away.
19. Long he them bore above the subject plaine,
So far as Ewghen bow a shaft may send,
Till struggling strong did him at last constraine
To let them downe before his flightes end:

¹ Fluttering, unsubstantial.

As hagdard hauke, presuming to contend
With hardy fowle above his hable might,
His wearie pounces all in vaine doth spend
To trusse¹ the pray too heavy for his flight;
Which, comming down to ground, does free it selfe by fight.

20. He so disseized² of his gryping grosse,
The knight his thrillant speare againe assayd
In his bras-plated body to embosse,³
And three mens strength unto the stroake he layd;
Wherewith the stiffe beame quaked as affrayd,
And glauncing from his scaly necke did glyde
Close under his left wing, then broad displayd:
The percing steele there wrought a wound full wyde,
That with the uncouth smart the Monster lowdly cryde.
21. He cryde, as raging seas are wont to rore
When wintry storme his wrathful wreck does threat;
The rolling billowes beate the ragged shore,
As they the earth would shoulder from her seat;
And greedy gulfe does gape, as he would eat
His neighbour element in his revenge:
Then gin the blustering brethren boldly threat
To move the world from off his stedfast henge,
And boystrous battaile make, each other to avenge.
22. The steely head stuck fast still in his flesh,
Till with his cruell clawes he snatcht the wood,
And quite a sunder broke. Forth flowed fresh
A gushing river of blacke gory blood,
That drowned all the land whereon he stood;
The streame thereof would drive a water-mill:
Trebly augmented was his furious mood
With bitter sence of his deepe rooted ill,
That flames of fire he threw forth from his large nosethril
23. His hideous tayle then hurled he about,
And therewith all enwrapt the nimble thyes
Of his froth-fomy steed, whose courage stout
Striving to loose the knott that fast him tyes,

¹ Seize.² Dispossessed.³ Stick.

Himselfe in streighter bandes too rash implyes,
 That to the ground he is perforce constaynd
 To throw his ryder; who can quickly ryse
 From off the earth, with durty blood distaynd,
 For that reprochfull fall right fowly he disdaynd;

24. And fercely tooke his trenchand¹ blade in hand,
 With which he stroke so furious and so fell,
 That nothing seemd the puissaunce could withstand:
 Upon his crest the hardned yron fell,
 But his more hardned crest was armd so well,
 That deeper dint therein it would not make;
 Yet so extremely did the buffe² him quell,
 That from thenceforth he shund the like to take,
 But when he saw them come he did them still forsake.

25. The knight was wroth to see his stroke beguyld,³
 And smot againe with more outrageous might;
 But backe againe the sparcling steele recoyld,
 And left not any marke where it did light,
 As if in Adamant rocke it had beene pight.⁴
 The beast, impatient of his smarting wound
 And of so fierce and forcible despyght,
 Thought with his winges to sty⁵e above the ground;
 But his late wounded wing unserviceable found.

26. Then full of grieve and anguish vehement,
 He lowdly brayd, that like was never heard;
 And from his wide devouring oven sent
 A flake of fire, that flashing in his beard
 Him all amazd, and almost made afeard:
 The scorching flame sore swunged⁶ all his face,
 And through his armour all his body seard,
 That he could not endure so cruell cace,
 But thought his armes to leave, and helmet to unlace.

* * * * *

¹ Keen.² Blow.³ Diverted, turned aside.⁴ Pitched, thrown.⁵ Soar⁶ Singed.

28. Faynt, wearie, sore, emboyled,¹ grieved, brent,
With heat, toyle, wounds, armes, smart, and inward fire,
That never man such mischiefes did torment:
Death better were; death did he oft desire,
But death will never come when needes require.
Whom so dismayd when that his foe beheld,
He cast² to suffer him no more respire,
But gan his sturdy sterne about to weld,³
And him so strongly stroke, that to the ground him feld.
29. It fortun'd, (as fayre it then befell)
Behynd his backe, unweeting, where he stood,
Of auncient time there was a springing well,
From which fast trickled forth a silver flood,
Full of great vertues, and for med'cine good:
Whylome,⁴ before that cursed Dragon got
That happy land, and all with innocent blood
Defyld those sacred waves, it rightly hot⁵
The well of life, ne yet his vertues had forgot:
30. For unto life the dead it could restore,
And guilt of sinfull crimes cleane wash away;
Those that with sicknesse were infected sore
It could recure; and aged long decay
Renew, as one were borne that very day.
Both Silo this, and Jordan, did excell,
And th' English Bath, and eke the German Spau;
Ne can Cephise, nor Hebrus, match this well:
Into the same the knight back overthrowen fell.
31. Now gan the golden Phœbus for to steepe
His fierie face in billowes of the west,
And his faint steedes watred in Ocean deepe,
Whiles from their journall⁶ labours they did rest;
When that infernall Monster, having kest⁷
His wearie foe into that living well,
Gan high advaunce his broad discoloured brest
Above his wonted pitch, with countenance fell,
And clapt his yron wings as victor he did dwell.

¹ Heated.² Determined.³ Wield.⁴ Of old, formerly.⁵ Was called.⁶ Daily.⁷ Cast.

32. Which when his pensive Lady saw from farre,
Great woe and sorrow did her soule assay,
As weening that the sad end of the warre;
And gan to highest God entirely¹ pray
That feared chaunce from her to turne away:
With folded hands, and knees full lowly bent,
All night shee watcht, ne once adowne would lay
Her dainty limbs in her sad dreriment,
But praying still did wake, and waking did lament.
33. The morrow next gan earely to appeare,
That Titan rose to runne his daily race;
But earely, ere the morrow next gan reare
Out of the sea faire Titans deawy face,
Up rose the gentle virgin from her place,
And looked all about, if she might spy
Her loved knight to move his manly pace:
For she had great doubt of his safety,
Since late she saw him fall before his enemy.
34. At last she saw where he upstarted brave
Out of the well, wherein he drenched lay:
As Eagle, fresh out of the ocean wave,
Where he hath lefte his plumes all hory gray,
And deckt himselfe with fethers youthly gay,
Like Eyas hauke up mounts unto the skies,
His newly-budded pineons to assay,
And marveiles at himselfe stil ás he flies:
So new this new-borne knight to battell new did rise.
35. Whom when the damned feend so fresh did spy,
No wonder if he wondred at the sight,
And doubted whether his late enemy
It were, or other new supplied knight.
He now, to prove his late-renewed might,
High brandishing his bright deaw-burning blade,
Upon his crested scalp so sore did smite,
That to the scull a yawning wound it made:
The deadly dint his dulled sences all dismaid.

¹ Earnestly.

36. I wote not whether the revenging steele
Were hardned with that holy water dew
Wherein he fell, or sharper edge did feele,
Or his baptized hands now greater grew,
Or other secret-vertue did ensew;
Els never could the force of fleshly arme,
Ne molten mettall, in his blood embrew;
For till that stownd¹ could never wight him harme
By subtilty, nor slight, nor might, nor mighty charme
37. The cruell wound enraged him so sore,
That loud he yelled for exceeding paine;
As hundred ramping Lions seemd to rore,
Whom ravenous hunger did thereto constraine:
Then gan he tosse aloft his stretched traine,
And therewith scourge the buxome² aire so sore,
That to his force to yelden it was faine;
Ne ought his sturdy strokes might stand afore,
That high trees overthrew, and rocks in peeces tore.
38. The same advauncing high above his head,
With sharpe intended sting so rude him smott,
That to the earth him drove, as stricken dead;
Ne living wight would have him life behott³:
The mortall sting his angry needle shott
Quite through his shield, and in his shoulder seasd,⁴
Where fast it stucke, ne would thereout be gott:
The grieve thereof him wondrous sore diseasd,
Ne might his ranceling paine with patience be appeasd.
39. But yet, more mindfull of his honour deare
Then of the grievous smart which him did wring,
From loathed soile he can him lightly reare,
And strove to loose the far infixed sting:
Which when in vaine he tryde with struggeling,
Inflam'd with wrath, his raging blade he hefte,⁵
And strooke so strongly, that the knotty string
Of his huge taile he quite a sonder clefte;
Five joints thereof he hewd, and but the stump him lefte.

¹ Moment.² Yielding.³ Promised.⁴ Seized.⁵ Heaved.

40. Hart cannot thinke what outrage and what cries,
With fowle enfouldred¹ smoake and flashing fire,
The hell-bred beast threw forth unto the skies,
That all was covered with darknesse dire:
Then, fraught with rancour and engorged² yre,
He cast at once him to avenge for all;
And, gathering up himselfe out of the mire
With his uneven wings, did fiercely fall
Upon his sunne-bright shield, and grypt it fast withall.
41. Much was the man encombred with his hold,
In feare to lose his weapon in his paw,
Ne wist yett how his talaunts to unfold;
Nor harder was from Cerberus greedy jaw
To plucke a bone, then from his cruell claw
To reave by strength the griped gage away:
Thrise he assayd it from his foote to draw,
And thrise in vaine to draw it did assay;
It booted nought to thinke to robbe him of his pray.
42. Tho, when he saw no power might prevaile,
His trusty sword he cald to his last aid,
Wherewith he fiersly did his foe assaile,
And double blowes about him stoutly laid,
That glauncing fire out of the yron plaid,
As sparkles from the Andvile use to fly,
When heavy hammers on the wedge are swaid:
Therewith at last he forst him to unty
One of his grasping feete, him to defend thereby.
43. The other foote, fast fixed on his shield,
Whenas no strength nor stroks mote him constraine
To loose, ne yet the warlike pledge to yield,
He smott thereat with all his might and maine,
That nought so wondrous puissaunce might sustaine:
Upon the joint the lucky steele did light,
And made such way that hewd it quite in twaine;
The paw yett missed not his minisht might,
But hong still on the shield, as it at first was pight.³

¹ Mixed with lightning.² Congested.³ Fixed.

44. For grieve thereof and divelish despight,
From his infernall founace forth he threw
Huge flames that dimmed all the heavens light,
Enrold in duskish smoke and brimstone blew:
As burning Aetna from his boyling stew
Doth belch out flames, and rockes in peeces broke,
And ragged ribs of mountaines molten new,
Enwrapt in coleblacke clowds and filthy smoke,
That al the land with stench and heven with horror choke.
45. The heate whereof, and harmefull pestilence,
So sore him noyd, that forst him to retire
A little backward for his best defence,
To save his body from the scorching fire,
Which he from hellish entrailes did expire¹ :
It chaunst, (eternall God that chaunce did guide)
As he recoiled backward, in the mire,
His nigh foreweried feeble feet did slide,
And downe he fell, with dread of shame sore terrifide.
46. There grew a goodly tree him faire beside,
Loaden with fruit and apples rosy redd,
As they in pure vermilion had been dide,
Whereof great vertues over-all were redd;
For happy life to all which thereon fedd,
And life eke everlasting did befall:
Great God it planted in that blessed stedd²
With his Almighty hand, and did it call
The tree of life, the crime of our first fathers fall.
47. In all the world like was not to be fownd,
Save in that soile, where all good things did grow,
And freely sprong out of the fruitfull grownd,
As incorrupted Nature did them sow,
Till that dredd Dragon all did overthrow.
Another like faire tree eke grew thereby,
Whereof whoso did eat, eftsoones did know
Both good and ill. O mournfull memory!
That tree through one mans fault hath doen³ us all to dy.

¹ Breathe out.² Place.³ Made.

48. From that first tree forth flowd, as from a well,
A trickling streame of Balme, most soveraine
And dainty deare, which on the ground still fell,
And overflowed all the fertile plaine,
As it had deawed bene with timely raine:
Life and long health that gracious ointment gave,
And deadly wounds could heale, and reare againe
The sencelesse corse appointed for the grave:
Into that same he fell, which did from death him save.
49. For nigh thereto the ever damned Beast
Durst not approch, for he was deadly¹ made,
And al that life preserved did detest;
Yet he it oft adventur'd to invade.
By this the drouping day-light gan to fade,
And yield his rowme to sad succeeding night,
Who with her sable mantle gan to shade
The face of earth and wayes of living wight,
And high her burning torch set up in heaven bright.
50. When gentle Una saw the second fall
Of her deare knight, who, weary of long fight
And faint through losse of blood, moov'd not at all,
But lay, as in a dreame of deepe delight,
Besmeard with pretious Balme, whose vertuous might
Did heale his woundes, and scorching heat alay;
Againe she stricken was with sore affright,
And for his safetie gan devoutly pray,
And watch the noyous night, and wait for joyous day.
51. The joyous day gan early to appeare;
And fayre Aurora from the deawy bed
Of aged Tithone gan herselfe to reare
With rosy cheekes, for shame as blushing red:
Her golden locks for hast were loosely shed
About her eares, when Una her did marke
Clymbe to her charet, all with flowers spred,
From Heven high to chace the chearelesse darke;
With mery note her lowd salutes the mounting larke.

¹ Death-giving.

52. Then freshly up arose the doughty knight,
All healed of his hurts and woundes wide,
And did himselfe to battaile ready dight;
Whose early foe awaiting him beside
To have devourd, so soone as day he spyde
When now he saw himselfe so freshly reare,
As if late fight had nought him damnifyde,¹
He woxe dismaid, and gan his fate to feare
Nathlesse with wonted rage he him advaunced neare.
53. And in his first encounter, gaping wyde,
He thought attonce him to have swallowed quight,
And rusht upon him with outragious pryde;
Who him rencountring fierce, as hauke in flight,
Perforce rebutted backe. The weapon bright,
Taking advantage of his open jaw,
Ran through his mouth with so importune might,
That deepe emperst his darksom hollow maw,
And, back retyrd, his life blood forth with all did draw.
54. So downe he fell, and forth his life did breath,
That vanisht into smoke and cloudes swift;
So downe he fell, that th' earth him underneath
Did grone, as feeble so great load to lift;
So downe he fell, as an huge rocky clift,
Whose false foundation waves have washt away,
With dreadfull poyse² is from the mayneland rift,
And rolling downe great Neptune doth dismay:
So downe he fell, and like an heaped mountaine lay.
55. The knight him selfe even trembled at his fall,
So huge and horrible a masse it seemd;
And his deare Lady, that beheld it all,
Durst not approch for dread which she misdeemd;
But yet at last, whenas the direfull feend
She saw not stirre, off-shaking vaine affright
She nigher drew, and saw that joyous end:
Then God she praysd, and thankt her faithfull knight,
That had atchievde so great a conquest by his might.

¹ Hurt.² Weight.

CANTO XII

Fayre Una to the Redcrosse Knight
 Betrouthed is with joy:
 Though false Duessa, it to barre,
 Her false sleighes doe imploy.

1. BEHOLD! I see the haven nigh at hand
 To which I meane my wearie course to bend;
 Vere the maine shete, and beare up with the land,
 The which afore is fayrly to be kend,¹
 And seemeth safe from storms that may offend;
 There this fayre virgin wearie of her way
 Must landed bee, now at her journeyes end;
 There eke my feeble barke a while may stay,
 Till mery wynd and weather call her thence away.
2. Scarsely had Phœbus in the glooming East
 Yett harnessed his fyrie-footed teeme,
 Ne reard above the earth his flaming creast,
 When the last deadly smoke aloft did steeme,
 That signe of last outbreathed life did seeme
 Unto the watchman on the castle-wall;
 Who thereby dead that balefull Beast did deeme
 And to his Lord and Lady lowd gan call,
 To tell how he had seene the Dragons fatall fall.
3. Uprose with hasty joy, and feeble speed,
 That aged Syre, the Lord of all that land,
 And looked forth, to weet if trew indeed
 Those tydinges were, as he did understand:
 Which whenas trew by tryall he out fond,
 He badd to open wyde his brasen gate,
 Which long time had beene shut, and out of hond²
 Proclaymed joy and peace through all his state;
 For dead now was their foe, which them forrayed³ late.
4. Then gan triumphant Trompets sownd on hye,
 That sent to heaven the ecchoed report
 Of their new joy, and happie victory
 Gainst him, that had them long opprest with tort,⁴

¹ Known.² Immediately.³ Ravaged.⁴ Wrong.

And fast imprisoned in sieged fort.
Then all the people, as in solemne feast,
To him assembled with one full consort,
Rejoycing at the fall of that great beast,
From whose eternall bondage now they were releast.

5. Forth came that auncient Lord, and aged Queene,
Arayd in antique robes downe to the grownd,
And sad¹ habiliments right well beseene² :
A noble crew about them waited rownd
Of sage and sober peres, all gravely gownd;
Whom far before did march a goodly band
Of tall young men, all hable armes to sownd³;
But now they laurell braunches bore in hand,
Glad signe of victory and peace in all their land.
6. Unto that doughtie Conquerour they came,
And him before themselves prostrating low,
Their Lord and Patrone loud did him proclame,
And at his feet their lawrell boughes did throw.
Soone after them, all dauncing on a row,
The comely virgins came, with girlands dight,
As fresh as flowres in medow greene doe grow
When morning deaw upon their leaves doth light;
And in their handes sweet Timbrels all upheld on hight.
7. And them before the fry of children yong
Their wanton sportes and childish mirth did play,
And to the Maydens sownding tymbrels song
In well attuned notes a joyous lay,
And made delightfull musick all the way,
Untill they came where that faire virgin stood:
As fayre Diana in fresh sommers day
Beholdes her nymphes enraung'd in shady wood,
Some wrestle, some do run, some bathe in christall flood.
8. So she beheld those maydens meriment
With chearefull vew; who, when to her they came,
Themselves to ground with gracious humblesse bent,
And her ador'd by honorable name,

¹ Sober, grave.² Comely.³ Wield.

Lifting to heaven her everlasting fame:
 Then on her head they sett a girlond greene,
 And crowned her twixt earnest and twixt game:
 Who, in her self-resemblance well besene,
 Did seeme, such as she was, a goodly maiden Queene.

9. And after all the raskall¹ many ran,
 Heaped together in rude rablement,
 To see the face of that victorious man,
 Whom all admired as from heaven sent,
 And gazd upon with gaping wonderment;
 But when they came where that dead Dragon lay,
 Stretcht on the ground in monstrous large extent,
 The sight with ydle feare did them dismay,
 Ne durst approch him nigh to touch, or once assay.
10. Some feard, and fledd; some feard, and well it faynd;
 One, that would wiser seeme then all the rest,
 Warnd him not touch, for yet perhaps remaynd
 Some lingring life within his hollow brest,
 Or in his wombe might lurke some hidden nest
 Of many Dragonettes, his fruitfull seede:
 Another saide, that in his eyes did rest
 Yet sparckling fyre, and badd thereof take heed;
 Another said, he saw him move his eyes indeed.
11. One mother, whenas her foolehardy chyld
 Did come too neare, and with his talants play,
 Halfe dead through feare, her litle babe revyld,
 And to her gossibs gan in counsell say;
 'How can I tell, but that his talants may
 Yet scratch my sonne, or rend his tender hand?'
 So diversly them selves in vaine they fray;
 Whiles some more bold to measure him nigh stand,
 To prove how many acres he did spred of land.
12. Thus flocked all the folke him rownd about;
 The whiles that hoarie king, with all his traine,
 Being arrived where that champion stout
 After his foes defeasaunce³ did remaine,

¹ Common.² Frighten.³ Defeat.

Him goodly greetes, and fayre does entertayne
With princely gifts of yvory and gold,
And thousand thanks him yeeldes for all his paine.
Then when his daughter deare he does behold,
Her dearely doth imbrace, and kisseth manifold.

13. And after to his Pallace he them brings,
With shaumes, and trompets, and with Clarions sweet;
And all the way the joyous people singes,
And with their garments strowes the paved street;
Whence mounting up, they fynd purveyaunce¹ meet
Of all, that royall Princes court became;
And all the floore was underneath their feet
Bespredd with costly scarlott of great name,
On which they lowly sitt, and fitting purpose frame.
14. What needes me tell their feast and goodly guize,
In which was nothing riotous nor vaine?
What needes of dainty dishes to devize,
Of comely services, or courtly trayne?
My narrow leaves cannot in them contayne
The large discourse of roiall Princes state.
Yet was their manner then but bare and playne;
For th' antique world excesse and pryde did hate:
Such proud luxurious pompe is swollen up but late.
15. Then, when with meates and drinkes of every kinde
Their fervent appetites they quenched had,
That auncient Lord gan fit occasion finde,
Of straunge adventures, and of perils sad
Which in his travell him befallen had,
For to demaund of his renowned guest:
Who then with utt'rance grave, and count'nance sad,
From poynt to poynt, as is before exprest,
Discourst his voyage long, according his request.
16. Great pleasure, mixt with pittiful regard,
That godly King and Queene did passionate,²
Whyles they his pittifull adventures heard;
That oft they did lament his lucklesse state,

¹ Supply.² Express passionately.

And often blame the too importune¹ fate
 That heaped on him so many wrathfull wreakes;
 For never gentle knight, as he of late,
 So tossed was in fortunes cruell freakes:
 And all the while salt teares bedewd the hearers cheaks.

17. Then sayd that royall Pere in sober wise;
 'Deare Sonne, great beene the evils which ye bore
 From first to last in your late enterprise,
 That I note² whether praise or pittie more;
 For never living man, I weene, so sore
 In sea of deadly daungers was distrest:
 But since now safe ye seised have the shore,
 And well arrived are, (high God be blest!)
 Let us devise of ease and everlasting rest.'
18. 'Ah dearest Lord!' said then that doughty knight,
 'Of ease or rest I may not yet devise;
 For by the faith which I to armes have plight,
 I bownden am streight after this emprise,
 As that your daughter can ye well advize,
 Backe to retourne to that great Faery Queene,
 And her to serve sixe yeares in warlike wize,
 Gainst that proud Paynim king that works her teene:³
 Therefore I ought crave pardon, till I there have beene.'
19. 'Unhappy falls that hard necessity,'
 (Quoth he) 'the troubler of my happy peace,
 And vowed foe of my felicity;
 Ne I against the same can justly preace⁴:
 But since that band ye cannot now release,
 Nor doen undo, (for vowes may not be vayne)
 Soone as the terme of those six yeares shall cease,
 Ye then shall hither backe retourne agayne,
 The marriage to accomplish vovd betwixt you twayn.
20. 'Which, for my part, I covet to performe
 In sort as through the world I did proclame,
 That who-so kild that monster most deforme,
 And him in hardy battayle overcame,

¹ Importunate, unseasonable.² Know not.³ Grief.⁴ Press.

Should have mine onely daughter to his Dame,
And of my kingdome heyre apparaunt bee:
Therefore, since now to thee perteynes the same
By dew desert of noble chevalree,
Both daughter and eke kingdome lo! I yield to thee.'

21. Then forth he called that his daughter fayre,
The fairest Un', his onely daughter deare,
His onely daughter and his only hayre;
Who forth proceeding with sad¹ sober cheare,
As bright as doth the morning starre appeare
Out of the East, with flaming lockes bedight,
To tell that dawning day is drawing neare,
And to the world does bring long-wished light:
So faire and fresh that Lady shewd herselfe in sight.

22. So faire and fresh, as freshest flowre in May;
For she had layd her mournfull stole aside,
And widow-like sad wimple throwne away,
Wherewith her heavenly beautie she did hide,
Whiles on her wearie journey she did ride;
And on her now a garment she did weare
All lily white, withoutten spot or pride,
That seemd like silke and silver woven neare;
But neither silke nor silver therein did appeare.

23. The blazing brightnesse of her beauties beame,
And glorious light of her sunshyny face,
To tell were as to strive against the streame:
My ragged rimes are all too rude and bace
Her heavenly lineaments for to enchace.²
Ne wonder; for her own deare loved knight,
All³ were she daily with himselfe in place,
Did wonder much at her celestial sight:
Oft had he seene her faire, but never so faire dight.

* * * * *

40. Great joy was made that day of young and old,
And solemne feast proclaymd throughout the land,
That their exceeding merth may not be told:
Suffice it heare by signes to understand

¹ Grave.

² Portray, enshrine.

³ Although.

The usuall joyes at knitting of loves band.
Thrise happy man the knight himselfe did hold,
Possessed of his Ladies hart and hand;
And ever, when his eie did her behold,
His heart did seeme to melt in pleasures manifold.

41. Her joyous presence, and sweet company,
In full content he there did long enjoy;
Ne wicked envy, ne vile gealosity,
His deare delights were hable to annoy:
Yet, swimming in that sea of blissfull joy,
He nought forgott how he whilome had sworne,
In case he could that monstrous beast destroy,
Unto his Faery Queene backe to retourne;
The which he shortly did, and Una left to mourne.

42. Now, strike your sailes, yee jolly Mariners,
For we be come unto a quiet rode,¹
Where we must land some of our passengers,
And light this weary vessell of her lode:
Here she a while may make her safe abode,
Till she repaired have her tackles spent,
And wants supplide; And then againe abroad
On the long voiage whereto she is bent:
Well may she speede, and fairely finish her intent!

¹ Roadstead.

THE SECOND BOOK

CONTAYNING THE LEGEND OF SIR GUYON, OR OF TEMPERAUNCE

CANTO I

Guyon, by Archimage abusd,
The Redcrosse knight awaytes;
Fyndes Mordant and Amavia slaine
With pleasures poisoned baytes.

* * * * *

6. His carriage was full comely and upright;
His countenance demure and temperate;
But yett so sterne and terrible in sight,
That cheard his friendes, and did his foes amate¹:
He was an Elfin borne of noble state
And mickle worship in his native land;
Well could he tourney, and in lists debate,²
And knighthood tooke of good Sir Huons hand,
When with king Oberon he came to Faery land.
7. Him als accompanyd upon the way
A comely Palmer, clad in black attyre,
Of rypest yeares, and heares all hoarie gray,
That with a staffe his feeble steps did stire,³
Least his long way his aged limbes should tire:
And, if by lookes one may the mind aread,⁴
He seemd to be a sage and sober syre;
And ever with slow pace the knight did lead,
Who taught his trampling steed with equall steps to tread.

* * * * *

¹ Daunt.

² Contend.

³ Move.

⁴ Tell.

35. In this faire wize they traveild long yfere,¹
Through many hard assayes which did betide;
Of which he honour still away did beare,
And spred his glory through all cuntryes wide.
At last, as chaunst them by a forest side
To passe, for succour from the scorching ray,
They heard a ruefull voice, that dearnly² cride
With percing shriekes and many a dolefull lay;
Which to attend awhile their forward steps they stay.
36. 'But if that carelesse hevens,' (quoth she) 'despise
The doome of just revenge, and take delight
To see sad pageaunts of mens miseries,
As bownd by them to live in lives despight³;
Yet can they not warne death from wretched wight.
Come, then; come soone; come sweetest death, to me,
And take away this long lent loathed light:
Sharpe be thy wounds, but sweete the medicines be,
That long captived soules from weary thraldome free.
37. 'But thou, sweete Babe, whom frowning froward fate
Hath made sad wnesse of thy fathers fall,
Sith⁴ heven thee deignes to hold in living state,
Long maist thou live, and better thrive withall
Then to thy lucklesse parents did befall.
Live thou; and to thy mother dead attest
That cleare she dide from blemish criminall:
Thy litle hands embrewd in bleeding brest
Loe! I for pledges leave. So give me leave to rest.'
38. With that a deadly shrieke she forth did throw
That through the wood re-echoed againe;
And after gave a grone so deepe and low
That seemd her tender heart was rent in twaine,
Or thrild with point of thorough-piercing paine:
As gentle Hynd, whose sides with cruell steele
Through launched, forth her bleeding life does raine,
Whiles the sad pang approching shee does feelee,
Braies out her latest breath, and up her eies doth seele.

¹ Together.² Sadly.³ In despite of life.⁴ Since.

39. Which when that warriour heard, dismounting straict
From his tall steed, he rusht into the thick,
And soone arrived where that sad pourtraict
Of death and dolour lay, halfe dead, halfe quick;
In whose white alabaster brest did stick
A cruell knife that made a griesly wownd,
From which forth gusht a stream of gore blood thick,
That all her goodly garments staind arownd,
And into a deepe sanguine dide the grassy grownd.
40. Pitifull spectacle of deadly smart,
Beside a bubling fountaine low she lay,
Which shee increased with her bleeding hart,
And the cleane waves with purple gore did ray¹:
Als in her lap a lovely babe did play
His cruell sport, in stead of sorrow dew;
For in her streaming blood he did embay²
His little hands, and tender joints embrew:
Pitifull spectacle, as ever eie did vew!
41. Besides them both, upon the soiled gras
The dead corse of an armed knight was spred,
Whose armour all with blood besprincled was;
His ruddy lips did smyle, and rosy red
Did paint his chearefull cheekes, yett being ded;
Seemd to have beene a goodly personage,
Now in his freshest flowre of lusty-hed,
Fitt to inflame faire Lady with loves rage,
But that fiers fate did crop the blossome of his age.
42. Whom when the good Sir Guyon did behold,
His hart gan wexe as starke³ as marble stone,
And his fresh blood did frieze with fearefull cold,
That all his sences seemd berefte attone⁴:
At last his mighty ghost gan depe to grone,
As Lion, grudging in his great disdaine,
Mournes inwardly, and makes to him selfe mone;
Til ruth and fraile affection did constraine
His stout courage to stoupe, and shew his inward paine.

¹ Soil.² Bathe.³ Stiff.⁴ At once.

43. Out of her gored wound the cruell steel
He lightly snatcht, and did the floodgate stop
With his faire garment; then gan softly feel
Her feeble pulse, to prove if any drop
Of living blood yet in her veynes did hop:
Which when he felt to move, he hoped faire
To call backe life to her forsaken shop.
So well he did her deadly wounds repaire,
That at the last shee gan to breath out living aire.
44. Which he perceiving greatly gan reioice,
And goodly counsell, that for wounded hart
Is meetest med'cine, tempred with sweete voice:
'Ay me! deare Lady, which the ymage art
Of ruefull pittie and impatient smart,
What direfull chaunce, armd with avenging fate,
Or cursed hand, hath plaid this cruell part,
Thus fowle to hasten your untimely date?
Speake, O dear Lady, speake! help never comes too late.'
45. Therewith her dim eie-lids she up gan reare,
On which the drery death did sitt as sad
As lump of lead, and made darke clouds appeare:
But when as him, all in bright armour clad,
Before her standing she espied had,
As one out of a deadly dreame affright,
She weakely started, yet she nothing drad¹:
Streight downe againe herselfe, in great despight,
She groveling threw to ground, as hating life and light.
46. The gentle knight her soone with carefull paine
Uplifted light, and softly did uphold:
Thrise he her reard, and thrise she sunck againe,
Till he his armes about her sides gan fold,
And to her said; 'Yet, if the stony cold
Have not all seized on your frozen hart,
Let one word fall that may your grief unfold,
And tell the secrete of your mortall smart:
He oft finds present helpe who does his grieffe impart.'

¹ Dreaded.

47. Then, casting up a deadly looke, full low
 Shee sight from bottome of her wounded brest;
 And after, many bitter throbs did throw,
 With lips full pale and foltring¹ tong opprest,
 These wōrds she breathed forth from riven chest:
 'Leave, ah! leave off, whatever wight thou bee,
 To lett² a weary wretch from her dew rest,
 And trouble dying soules tranquilittee;
 Take not away, now got, which none would give to me.'
48. 'Ah! far be it,' (said he) 'Deare dame, fro mee,
 To hinder soule from her desired rest,
 Or hold sad life in long captivitee;
 For all I seeke is but to have redrest
 The bitter pangs that doth your heart infest.
 Tell then, O Lady! tell what fatall priefe³
 Hath with so huge misfortune you opprest;
 That I may cast to compas your reliefe,
 Or die with you in sorrow, and partake your griefe.'
49. With feeble hands then stretched forth on hye,
 As heven accusing guilty of her death,
 And with dry drops congealed in her eye,
 In these sad wordes she spent her utmost breath:
 'Heare then, O man! the sorrowes that uneath⁴
 My tong can tell, so far all sence they pas.
 Loe! this dead corpse, that lies here underneath,
 The gentlest knight, that ever on greene gras
 Gay steed with spurs did pricke, the good Sir Mortdant was:
- * * * * * *
51. 'Him fortun'd (hard fortune ye may ghesse)
 To come, where vile Acrasia does wonne⁵;
 Acrasia, a false enchaunteresse,
 That many errant knightes hath fowle fordonne⁶;
 Within a wandring Island, that doth ronne
 And stray in perilous gulfe, her dwelling is.
 Fayre Sir, if ever there ye travell, shonne
 The cursed land where many wend⁷ amis,
 And know it by the name: it hight⁸ the *Bowre of blis*.

¹ Faltering.² Hinder.³ Trial.⁴ Hardly.⁵ Dwell.⁶ Destroyed.⁷ Go.⁸ Is called.

52. 'Her blis is all in pleasure, and delight,
Wherewith she makes her lovers dronken mad;
And then with words, and weedes,¹ of wondrous might,
On them she workes her will to uses bad:
My liefest Lord she thus beguiled had;
For he was flesh: (all flesh doth frayltie breed)
Whom when I heard to beene so ill bestad,
Weake wretch, I wrapt myselfe in Palmers weed,
And cast to seek him forth through danger and great dreed.
54. 'Him so I sought; and so at last I fownd,
Where him that witch had thrall'd to her will,
In chaines of lust and lewde desyres ybownd,
And so transformed from his former skill,²
That me he knew not, nether his owne ill;
Till, through wise handling and faire governaunce,
I him recured to a better will,
Purged from drugs of fowle intemperaunce:
Then meanes I gan devise for his deliveraunce.
55. 'Which when the vile Enchaunteresse perceiv'd,
How that my Lord from her I would reprove,³
With cup thus charmd him parting she deceivd;
"Sad verse, give death to him that death does give,
"And losse of love to her that loves to live,
"So soone as Bacchus with the Nymphe does lincke!"
So parted we, and on our journey drive;
Till, coming to this well, he stoupt to drinke:
The charme fulfild, dead suddeinly he downe did sincke.
56. 'Which when I, wretch' — Not one word more she sayd,
But breaking off the end for want of breath,
And slyding soft, as downe to sleepe her layd,
And ended all her woe in quiet death.
That seeing, good Sir Guyon coud uneath⁴
From teares abstayne; for grieve his hart did grate,⁵
And from so heavie sight his head did wreath,
Accusing fortune, and too cruell fate,
Which plunged had faire Lady in so wretched state.

¹ Herbs.⁴ Hardly.² Understanding, discernment.³ Set free⁵ Trouble.

57. Then turning to his Palmer said; 'Old syre,
Behold the ymage of mortalitie,
And feeble nature cloth'd with fleshly tyre.¹
When raging passion with fierce tyranny
Robs reason of her dew regalitie,
And makes it servaunt to her basest part,
The strong it weakens with infirmitie,
And with bold furie armes the weakest hart:
The strong through pleasure soonest falles, the weake
through smart.'

58. 'But temperaunce' (said he) 'with golden squire
Betwixt them both can measure out a meane;
Nether to melt in pleasures whott² desyre,
Nor frye in hartlesse grieve and dolefull tene³:
Thrise happy man, who fares them both atweene!
But sith this wretched woman overcome
Of anguish, rather then of crime, hath bene,
Reserve her cause to her eternall doome;
And, in the meane, vouchsafe her honorable toombe.'

CANTO II

Babes bloody handes may not be clensd:
The face of golden Meane:
Her sisters, two Extremities,
Strive her to banish cleane.

1. Thus when Sir Guyon with his faithful guyde
Had with dew rites and dolorous lament
The end of their sad Tragedie uptyde,
The litle babe up in his armes he hent⁴;
Who with sweet pleasaunce, and bold blandishment,
Gan smyle on them, that rather ought to weepe,
As carelesse of his woe, or innocent
Of that was doen; that ruth emperced deepe
In that knightes hart, and wordes with bitter teares did
steepe:

¹ Attire.² Hot.³ Sorrow.⁴ Took.

2. 'Ah! lucklesse babe, borne under cruell starre,
 And in dead parents balefull ashes bred,
 Full little weenest thou what sorrowes are
 Left thee for porcion of thy livelyhed;
 Poore Orphane! in the wild world scattered,
 As budding braunch rent from the native tree,
 And throwen forth, till it be withered.
 Such is the state of men: Thus enter we
 Into this life with woe, and end with miseree!'
3. Then, soft himselfe inclyning on his knee
 Downe to that well, did in the water weene
 (So love does loath disdainefull nicitee)
 His guiltie handes from bloody gore to cleene.
 He washt them oft and oft, yet nought they beene
 For all his washing cleaner. Still he strove;
 Yet still the litle hands were bloody seene:
 The which him into great amaz'ment drove,
 And into diverse doubt his wavering wonder clove.

* * * * *

5. Whom thus at gaze the Palmer gan to bord¹
 With goodly reason, and thus fayre bespake;
 'Ye bene right hard amated, gracious Lord,
 And of your ignorance great merveill make,
 Whiles cause not well conceived ye mistake:
 But know, that secret vertues are infusd
 In every fountaine, and in everie lake,
 Which who hath skill them rightly to have chusd,
 To prooffe of passing wonders hath full often usd:
6. 'Of those, some were so from their sourse indewd
 By great Dame Nature, from whose fruitfull pap
 Their welheads spring, and are with moisture deawd;
 Which feedes each living plant with liquid sap,
 And filles with flowres fayre Floraes painted lap:
 But other some, by guifte of later grace,
 Or by good prayers, or by other hap,
 Had vertue pourd into their waters bace,
 And thenceforth were renowmd, and sought from place
 to place.

¹ Accost.

7. 'Such is this well, wrought by occasion straunge,
Which to her Nymph befell. Upon a day,
As she the woodes with bow and shaftes did raunge,
The hartlesse Hynd and Robucke to dismay,
Dan Faunus chaunst to meet her by the way,
And, kindling fire at her faire-burning eye,
Inflamed was to follow beauties pray,
And chaced her that fast from him did fly;
As hynd from her, so she fled from her enemy.
8. 'At last, when fayling breath began to faint,
And saw no meanes to scape, of shame affrayd,
She set her downe to weepe for sore constraint;
And to Diana calling lowd for ayde,
Her deare besought to let her die a mayd.
The goddesse heard; and suddeine, where she sate
Welling out streames of teares, and quite dismayd
With stony feare of that rude rustick mate,
Transformd her to a stone from stedfast virgins state.
9. 'Lo! now she is that stone; from whose two heads,
As from two weeping eyes, fresh streames do flow,
Yet colde through feare and old conceived dreads;
And yet the stone her semblance seems to show,
Shapt like a maide, that such ye may her know:
And yet her vertues in her water byde,
For it is chaste and pure as purest snow,
Ne lets her waves with any filth be dyde;
But ever, like herselfe, unstayned hath beene tryde.
10. 'From thence it comes, that this babes bloody hand
May not be clensd with water of this well:
Ne certes, Sir, strive you it to withstand,
But let them still be bloody, as befell,
That they his mothers innocence may tell,
As she bequeathd in her last testament;
That, as a sacred Symbole, it may dwell
In her sonnes flesh, to mind¹ revengement,
And be for all chaste Dames an endlesse moniment.'

¹ Call to mind.

[Guyon names the babe Ruddymane, and leaving it with Medina, the Golden Meane, continues his quest, which is to deliver the Palmer's land from the wicked Fay, Acrasia. Pyrochles, attacking Guyon without cause, is defeated, and Atin, his attendant, summons Cymocles, his brother, to the rescue.]

CANTO VI

Guyon is of immodest Merth
 Led into loose desyre;
 Fights with Cymochles, whiles his brother
 burns in furious fyre.

1. A HARDER lesson to learne Continence
 In joyous pleasure then in grievous paine;
 For sweetnesse doth allure the weaker sence
 So strongly, that uneathes¹ it can refraine
 From that which feeble nature covets faine:
 But grieve and wrath, that be her enemies
 And foes of life, she better can abstaine:
 Yet vertue vauntes in both her victories,
 And Guyon in them all shewes goodly maysteries.
2. Whom bold Cymochles traveiling to finde,
 With cruell purpose bent to wreake on him
 The wrath which Atin kindled in his mind,
 Came to a river, by whose utmost brim
 Wayting to passe, he saw whereas did swim
 Along the shore, as swift as glaunce of eye,
 A litle Gondelay, bedecked trim
 With boughes and arbours woven cunningly,
 That like a litle forrest seemed outwardly.
3. And therein sate a Lady fresh and fayre,
 Making sweet solace to herselfe alone:
 Sometimes she song as lowd as larke in ayre,
 Sometimes she laught, as merry as Pope Jone;
 Yet was there not with her else any one,
 That to her might move cause of meriment:
 Matter of merth enough, though there were none,
 She could devise; and thousand waies invent
 To feede her foolish humour and vaine jolliment.

¹ Hardly.

4. Which when far off Cymochles heard and saw,
He lowdly cald to such as were aboard
The little barke unto the shore to draw,
And him to ferry over that deepe ford.
The merry mariner unto his word
Soone hearkned, and her painted bote streightway
Turnd to the shore, where that same warlike Lord
She in receiv'd; but Atin by no way
She would admit, albe¹ the knight her much did pray.
5. Eftsoones her shallow ship away did slide,
More swift then swallow sheres² the liquid skye,
Withouten oare or Pilot it to guide,
Or winged canvas with the wind to fly:
Onely she turnd a pin,³ and by and by
It cut away upon the yielding wave,
Ne cared she her course for to apply;
For it was taught the way which she would have,
And both from rocks and flats it selfe could wisely save.
6. And all the way the wanton Damsell found
New merth her passenger to entertaine;
For she in pleasaunt purpose did abound,
And greatly joyed merry tales to faine,
Of which a store-house did with her remaine:
Yet seemed, nothing well they her became;
For all her wordes she drownd with laughter vaine,
And wanted grace in utt'ring of the same,
That turned all her pleasaunce to a scoffing game.
7. And other whiles vaine toyes she would devise,
As her fantasticke wit did most delight:
Sometimes her head she fondly would aguize⁴ .
With gaudy girlonds, of fresh flowrets dight
About her necke, or rings of rushes plight:
Sometimes, to de⁵ him laugh, she would assay
To laugh at shaking of the leaves light
Or to behold the water worke and play
About her little frigot, therein making way.

¹ Although.² Cleaves.³ Peg or bar.⁴ Dress.⁵ Make.

8. Her light behaviour and loose dalliaunce
 Gave wondrous great contentment to the knight,
 That of his way he had no sovenaunce,¹
 Nor care of vow'd revenge and cruell fight,
 But to weake wench did yield his martiall might:
 So easie was to quench his flamed minde
 With one sweete drop of sensuall delight.
 So easie is t' appease the stormy winde
 Of malice in the calme of pleasaunt woman-kind.
9. Diverse discourses in their way they spent;
 Mongst which Cymochles of her questioned
 Both what she was, and what that usage ment,
 Which in her cott² she daily practized?
 'Vaine man,' (saide she) 'that wouldest be reckoned
 A straunger in thy home, and ignoraunt
 Of Phædria, (for so my name is red)
 Of Phædria, thine owne fellow servaunt;
 For thou to serve Acrasia thy selfe doest vaunt.
10. 'In this wide Inland sea, that hight by name
 The Idle lake, my wandring ship I row,
 That knowes her port, and thither sayles by ayme,
 Ne care, ne feare I how the wind do blow,
 Or whether swift I wend, or whether slow:
 Both slow and swift alike do serve my tourne;
 Ne swelling Neptune ne lowd thundring Jove
 Can chaunge my cheare, or make me ever mourne:
 My little boat can safely passe this perilous bourne.³'
11. Whiles thus she talked, and whiles thus she toyd,
 They were far past the passage which he spake,
 And come unto an Island waste and voyd,
 That floted in the midst of that great lake;
 There her small Gondelay her port did make,
 And that gay payre, issewing on the shore,
 Disburdned her. Their way they forward take
 Into the land that lay them faire before,
 Whose pleasaunce she him shewd, and plentifull great
 store.

¹ Remembrance.² Small boat.³ Boundary.

12. It was a chosen plott of fertile land,
Emongst wide waves sett, like a litle nest,
As if it had by Natures cunning hand
Bene choycely picked out from all the rest,
And laid forth for ensample of the best:
No daintie flowre or herbe that growes on grownd,
No arborett with painted blossomes drest
And smelling sweete, but there it might be fownd
To bud out faire, and throwe her sweete smels al arownd.
13. No tree whose braunches did not bravely spring;
No braunch whereon a fine bird did not sitt;
No bird but did her shrill notes sweetely sing;
No song but did containe a lovely ditt.¹
Trees, braunches, birds, and songs, were framed fitt
For to allure fraile mind to carelesse ease:
Carelesse the man soone woxe,² and his weake witt
Was overcome of thing that did him please;
So pleased did his wrathfull purpose faire appease.
14. Thus when shee had his eyes and sences fed
With false delights, and fild with pleasures vayn,
Into a shady dale she soft him led,
And layd him downe upon a grassy playn;
And her sweete selfe without dread or disdayn
She sett beside, laying his head disarmd
In her loose lap, it softly to sustayn,
Where soone he slumbred fearing not be harmd:
The whiles with a love lay she thus him sweetly charmd.
15. 'Behold, O man! that toilesome paines doest take,
The flowrs, the fields, and all that pleasaunt growes,
How they them selves doe thine ensample make,
Whiles nothing envious nature them forth throwes
Out of her fruitfull lap; how no man knowes,
They spring, they bud, they blossome fresh and faire,
And decke the world with their rich pompous showes;
Yet no man for them taketh paines or care,
Yet no man to them can his carefull paines compare.

¹ Ditty.² Grew.

16. 'The lilly, Lady of the flowring field,
 The flowre-deluce, her lovely Paramoure,
 Bid thee to them thy fruitlesse labors yield,
 And soone leave off this toylsome weary stoure:
 Loe, loe! how brave she decks her bounteous boure,
 With silkin curtens and gold coverletts,
 Therein to shrowd her sumptuous Belamoure¹;
 Yet nether spinnes nor cards, ne cares nor fretts,
 But to her mother Nature all her care she letts.
17. 'Why then doest thou, O man! that of them all
 Art Lord, and eke of nature Soveraine,
 Wilfully make thyselfe a wretched thrall,
 And waste thy joyous howres in needelesse paine,
 Seeking for daunger and adventures vaine?
 What bootes it al to have, and nothing use?
 Who shall him rew that swimming in the maine
 Will die for thirst, and water doth refuse?
 Refuse such fruitlesse toile, and present pleasures chuse.'
18. By this she had him lulled fast asleepe,
 That of no worldly thing he care did take:
 Then she with liquors strong his eies did steepe,
 That nothing should him hastily awake.
 So she him left, and did her selfe betake
 Unto her boat again, with which she cleft
 The slouthfull² wave of that great griesy³ lake:
 Soone shee that Island far behind her left,
 And now is come to that same place where first she wefte.⁴
19. By this time was the worthy Guyon brought
 Unto the other side of that wide-strond
 Where she was rowing, and for passage sought.
 Him needed not long call; shee soone to hond
 Her ferry brought, where him she byding⁵ fond⁶
 With his sad guide: him selfe she tooke aboard,
 But the Blacke Palmer suffred still to stond,
 Ne would for price or prayers once affoord
 To ferry that old man over the perlous foord.

¹ Lover.⁴ Was wafted.² Slothful.⁵ Waiting.³ Sluggish.⁶ Found.

20. Guyon was loath to leave his guide behind,
Yet being entred might not backe retyre;
For the flitt¹ barke, obaying to her mind,
Forth launched quickly as she did desire,
Ne gave him leave to bid that aged sire
Adieu; but nimbly ran her wonted course
Through the dull billowes thicke as troubled mire,
Whom nether wind out of their seat could forse
Nor timely tides did drive out of their sluggish sourse.
21. And by the way, as was her wonted guize,²
Her mery fitt shee freshly gan to reare,
And did of joy and jollity devize,
Her selfe to cherish, and her guest to cheare.
The knight was courteous, and did not forbear
Her honest merth and pleasaunce to partake;
But when he saw her toy, and gibe, and geare,³
And passe the bonds of modest merimake,
Her dalliaunce he despis'd, and follies did forsake.
22. Yet she still followed her former style,
And said and did all that mote him delight,
Till they arrived in that pleasaunt Ile,
Where sleeping late she lefte her other knight.
But whenas Guyon of that land had sight,
He wist him selfe amisse, and angry said;
'Ah, Dame! perdy ye have not doen me right,
Thus to mislead mee, whiles I you obaid:
Me litle needed from my right way to have straid.'
23. 'Faire Sir,' (quoth she) 'be not displeasd at all.
Who fares on sea may not commaund his way,
Ne wind and weather at his pleasure call:
The sea is wide, and easy for to stray;
The wind unstable, and doth never stay.
But here a while ye may in safety rest,
Till season serve new passage to assay:
Better safe port then be in seas distrest.'
Therewith she laught, and did her earnest end in jest.

¹ Fleet.² Habit.³ Jeer.

24. But he, halfe discontent, mote¹ nathelesse
 Himselfe appease, and issewd forth on shore;
 The joyes whereof and happy fruitfulnessse,
 Such as he saw she gan him lay before,
 And all, though pleasaunt, yet she made much more:
 The fields did laugh, the flowres did freshly spring,
 The trees did bud, and early blossomes bore;
 And all the quire of birds did sweetly sing,
 And told that gardins pleasures in their caroling.
25. And she, more sweete then any bird on bough,
 Would oftentimes emongst them beare a part,
 And strive to passe² (as she could well enough)
 Their native musicke by her skilful art:
 So did she all that might his constant hart
 Withdraw from thought of warlike enterprize,
 And drowne in dissolute delights apart,
 Where noise of armes, or vew of martiall guize,
 Might not revive desire of knightly exercize.
26. But he was wise, and wary of her will,
 And ever held his hand upon his hart;
 Yet would not seeme so rude, and thewed³ ill,
 As to despise so curteous seeming part
 That gentle Lady did to him impart:
 But, fairly tempring, fond desire subdewd,
 And ever her desired to depart.
 She list not heare, but her disports poursewd,
 And ever bad him stay till time the tide renewd

CANTO VII

Guyon findes Mamon in a delve
 Sunning his threasure hore;
 Is by him tempted, and led downe
 To see his secrete store.

1. As Pilot well expert in perilous wave,
 That to a stedfast starre his course hath bent
 When foggy mistes or cloudy tempests have
 The faithfull light of that faire lampe yblent,⁴

¹ Must.² Surpass.³ Mannered.⁴ Blinded.

And cover'd heaven with hideous dreriment,
Upon his card¹ and compas firmes his eye,
The maysters of his long experiment,
And to them does the stedy helme apply,
Bidding his winged vessell fairely forward fly:

2. So Guyon having lost his trustie guyde,
Late left beyond that Ydle lake, proceedes
Yet on his way, of none accompanyde;
And evermore himselfe with comfort feedes
Of his own vertues and praise-worthie deedes.
So, long he yode,² yet no adventure found,
Which fame of her shrill trompet worthy reedes³;
For still he traveild through wide wastfull ground,
That nought but desert wilderness shewed all around.
3. At last he came unto a gloomy glade,
Cover'd with boughes and shrubs from heavens light,
Whereas he sitting found in secret shade
An uncouth, salvage, and uncivile wight,
Of griesly hew and fowle ill favour'd sight;
His face with smoke was tand, and eies were beard,
His head and beard with sout were ill bedight,
His cole-blacke hands did seeme to have ben seard
In smythes fire-spitting forge, and nayles like clawes
 appeard.
4. His yron cote, all overgrowne with rust,
Was underneath enveloped with gold;
Whose glistring glosse, darkned with filthy dust,
Well yet appeared to have beene of old
A worke of rich entayle and curious mould,
Woven with antickes and wyld ymagery;
And in his lap a masse of coyne he told,
And turned upside downe, to feede his eye
And covetous desire with his huge threasury.
5. And round about him lay on every side
Great heapes of gold that never could be spent;
Of which some were rude owre, not purifide

¹ Chart.² Traveled.³ Considers.

Of Mulcibers devouring element;
 Some others were new driven, and distent¹
 Into great Ingowes² and to wedges square;
 Some in round plates withouten moniment³;
 But most were stamp^t, and in their metal bare
 The antique shapes of kings and kesars straunge and rare.

6. Soone as he Guyon saw, in great affright
 And haste he rose for to remove aside
 Those pretious hils from straungers envious sight,
 And downe them poured through an hole full wide
 Into the hollow earth, them there to hide.
 But Guyon, lightly to him leaping, stayd
 His hand that trembled as one terrifyde;
 And though himselfe were at the sight dismayd,
 Yet him perforce restraynd, and to him doubtfull sayd:
7. 'What art thou, man, (if man at all thou art)
 That here in desert hast thine habitaunce,
 And these rich hils of welth doest hide apart
 From the worldes eye, and from her right usaunce?'
 Thereat, with staring eyes fixed askaunce,
 In great disdaine he answerd: 'Hardy Elfe,
 That darest view my direfull countenaunce,
 I read⁴ thee rash and heedlesse of thy selfe,
 To trouble my still seate, and heapes of pretious pelfe.
8. 'God of the world and worldlings I me call,
 Great Mammon, greatest god below the skye,
 That of my plenty poure out unto all,
 And unto none my graces do envye:
 Riches, renowme, and principality,
 Honour, estate, and all this worldes good,
 For which men swinck⁵ and sweat incessantly,
 Fro me do flow into an ample flood,
 And in the hollow earth have their eternall brood.
9. 'Wherefore, if me thou deigne to serve and sew,
 At thy commaund lo! all these mountaines bee:
 Or if to thy great mind, or greedy vew,
 All these may not suffice, there shall to thee

¹ Distended, beaten out. ² Ingots. ³ Stamp. ⁴ Consider. ⁵ Toil.

Ten times so much be nombred francke and free.'
'Mammon,' (said he) 'thy godheads vaunt is vaine,
And idle offers of thy golden fee;
To them that covet such eye-glutting gaine
Proffer thy giftes, and fitter servaunts entertaine.

10. 'Me ill besits, that in der-doing¹ armes
And honours suit my vowed daies do spend,
Unto thy bounteous baytes and pleasing charmes,
With which weake men thou witchest, to attend;
Regard of worldly mucke doth fowly blend,²
And low abase the high heroicke spright,
That joyes for crownes and kingdomes to contend:
Faire shields, gay steedes, bright armes be my delight;
Those be the riches fit for an advent'rous knight.'
11. 'Vaine glorious Elfe,' (said he) 'doest not thou weet,³
That money can thy wantes at will supply?
Sheilds, steeds, and armes, and all things for thee meet,
It can purvay in twinckling of an eye;
And crownes and kingdomes to thee multiply.
Do not I kings create, and throw the crowne
Sometimes to him that low in dust doth ly,
And him that raignd into his rowme thrust downe,
And whom I lust⁴ do heape with glory and renowne?'
12. 'All otherwise' (saide he) 'I riches read,
And deeme them roote of all disquietnesse;
First got with guile, and then preserv'd with dread,
And after spent with pride and lavishnesse,
Leaving behind them grieve and heavinesse:
Infinite mischiefes of them doe arize,
Strife and debate, bloodshed and bitterness,
Outrageous wrong, and hellish covetize,
That noble heart as great dishonour doth despize.
13. 'Ne thine be kingdomes, ne the scepters thine;
But realmes and rulers thou doest both confound,
And loyall truth to treason doest incline:
Witnesse the guiltlesse blood poud oft on ground,

¹ Dare-doing, bold.² Blind.³ Know.⁴ Please.

The crowned often slaine, the slayer cround;
The sacred Diademe in peeces rent,
And purple robe gored with many a wound,
Castles surprizd, great cities sackt and brent:
So mak'st thou kings, and gaynest wrongfull government.

14. 'Long were to tell the troublous stormes that tosse
The private state, and make the life unsweet:
Who swelling sayles in Caspian sea doth crosse,
And in frayle wood on Adrian gulf doth fleet,
Doth not, I weene, so many evils meet.'
Then Mammon waxing wroth; 'And why then,' sayd,
'Are mortall men so fond and undiscreet
So evill thing to seeke unto their ayd,
And having not complaine, and having it upbrayd?'
15. 'Indeede,' (quoth he) 'through fowle intemperaunce,
Frayle men are oft captiv'd to covetise;
But would they thinke with how small allowaunce
Untroubled Nature doth her selfe suffice,
Such superfluities they would despise,
Which with sad cares impeach our native joyes.
At the well-head the purest streames arise;
But mucky filth his braunching armes annoyes,
And with uncomely weedes the gentle wave accloyes.¹
16. 'The antique world, in his first flowring youth,
Fownd no defect in his Creators grace;
But with glad thankes, and unreprieved truth,
The guifts of soveraine bounty did embrace:
Like Angels life was then mens happy cace;
But later ages pride, like corn-fed steed,
Abusd her plenty and fat swolne encrease
To all licentious lust, and gan exceed
The measure of her meane and naturall first need.
17. 'Then gan a cursed hand the quiet wombe
Of his great Grandmother with steele to wound,
And the hid treasures in her sacred tombe
With Sacriledge to dig. Therein he fownd

¹ Obstructs.

Fountaines of gold and silver to abownd,
Of which the matter of his huge desire
And pompous pride eftsoones he did compownd;
Then avarice gan through his veines inspire
His greedy flames, and kindled life-devouring fire.'

18. 'Sonne,' (said he then) 'lett be thy bitter scorne,
And leave the rudenesse of that antique age
To them that liv'd therin in state forlorne:
Thou, that doest live in later times, must wage
Thy workes for wealth, and life for gold engage.
If then thee list my offred grace to use,
Take what thou please of all this surplusage;
If thee list not, leave have thou to refuse:
But thing refused doe not afterward accuse.'
19. 'Me list not' (said the Elfin knight) 'receave
Thing offred, till I know it well be gott;
Ne wote I but thou didst these goods bereave
From rightfull owner by unrighteous lott,
Or that bloodguiltinesse of guile them blott.'
'Perdy,' (quoth he) 'yet never eie did vew,
Ne tong did tell, ne hand these handled not;
But safe I have them kept in secret mew¹
From hevens sight, and powre of al which them poursew.'
20. 'What secret place' (quoth he) 'can safely hold
So huge a masse, and hide from heavens eie?
Or where hast thou thy wonne,² that so much gold
Thou canst preserve from wrong and robbery?'
'Come thou,' (quoth he) 'and see.' So by and by
Through that thick covert he him led, and fownd
A darkesome way, which no man could descry,
That deep descended through the hollow grownd,
And was with dread and horror compassed arownd.
21. At length they came into a larger space,
That stretcht itselfe into an ample playne;
Through which a beaten broad high way did trace,
That streight did lead to Plutoes griesly rayne.

¹ Confinement.² Dwelling.

By that wayes side there sate internall Payne,
And fast beside him sat tumultuous Strife:
The one in hand an yron whip did strayne,
The other brandished a bloody knife;
And both did gnash their teeth, and both did threaten life.

22. On thother side in one consort there sate
Cruell Revenge, and rancorous Despight,
Disloyall Treason, and hart-burning Hate;
But gnawing Gealosy, out of their sight
Sitting alone, his bitter lips did bight;
And trembling Feare still to and fro did fly,
And found no place wher safe he shroud him might:
Lamenting Sorrow did in darknes lye,
And shame his ugly face did hide from living eye

23. And over them sad horror with grim hew
Did alwaies sore, beating his yron wings;
And after him Owles and Night-ravens flew,
The hatefull messengers of heavy things,
Of death and dolor telling sad tidings;
Whiles sad Celeno, sitting on a clifte,
A song of bale and bitter sorrow sings,
That hart of flint asonder could have rifte;
Which having ended after him she flyeth swifte.

24. All these before the gates of Pluto lay,
By whom they passing spake unto them nought;
But th' Elfin knight with wonder all the way
Did feed his eyes, and fild his inner thought.
At last him to a litle dore he brought,
That to the gate of Hell, which gaped wide,
Was next adjoyning, ne them parted ought¹:
Betwixt them both was but a litle stride,
That did the house of Richesse from hell-mouth divide.

25. Before the dore sat selfe-consuming Care,
Day and night keeping wary watch and ward,
For feare least Force or Fraud should unaware
Breake in, and spoile the treasure there in gard:

¹ Aught, at all.

Ne would he suffer Sleepe once thitherward
Approch, albe¹ his drowsy den were next;
For next to death is Sleepe to be compard;
Therefore his house is unto his annext:
Here Sleep, ther Richesse, and Hel-gate them both betwext.

26. So soon as Mammon there arrivd, the dore
To him did open and affoorded way:
Him followed eke² Sir Guyon evermore,
Ne darkenesse him, ne daunger might dismay.
Soone as he entred was, the dore streight way
Did shutt, and from behind it forth there lept
An ugly feend, more fowle then dismall day,
The which with monstrous stalke behind him stept
And ever as he went dew watch upon him kept.
27. Well hoped hee, ere long that hardy guest,
If ever covetous hand, or lustfull eye,
Or lips he layd on thing that likte him best,
Or ever sleepe his eie-strings did untye,
Should be his pray. And therefore still on hye
He over him did hold his cruell clawes,
Threatning with greedy gripe to doe him dye,
And rend in peeces with his ravenous pawes,
If ever he transgrest the fatall Stygian lawes
28. That houses forme within was rude and strong,
Lyke an huge cave hewne out of rocky clifte,
From whose rough vout³ the ragged breaches hong
Emboist with massy gold of glorious guifte,
And with rich metall loaded every rifte,
That heavy ruine they did seeme to threat;
And over them Arachne high did lifte
Her cunning web, and spred her subtile nett,
Enwrapped in fowle smoke and clouds more black, then Jett.
29. Both roofe, and floore, and walls, were all of gold,
But overgrowne with dust and old decay,
And hid in darkenes, that none could behold
The hew thereof; for vew of cherefull day

¹ Although.² Also.³ Vault.

Did never in that house it selfe display,
But a faint shadow of uncertein light:
Such as a lamp, whose life does fade away,
Or as the Moone, cloathed with clowdy night,
Does show to him that walkes in feare and sad affright.

30. In all that rowme was nothing to be seene
But huge great yron chests, and coffers strong,
All bard with double bends, that none could weene
Them to efforce by violence or wrong:
On every side they placed were along;
But all the grownd with sculs was scattered,
And dead mens bones, which round about were flong;
Whose lives, it seemed, whilome there were shed,
And their vile carcasses now left unburied.

31. They forward passe; ne Guyon yet spoke word,
Till that they came unto an yron dore,
Which to them opened of his owne accord,
And shewd of richesse such exceeding store,
As eie of man did never see before,
Ne ever could within one place be fownd,
Though all the wealth which is, or was of yore,
Could gathered be through all the world arownd,
And that above were added to that under grownd.

32. The charge thereof unto a covetous Spright
Commaunded was, who thereby did attend,
And warily awaited day and night,
From other covetous feends it to defend,
Who it to rob and ransacke did intend.
Then Mammon, turning to that warriour, said;
'Loe! here the worldes blis: loe! here the end,
To which al men doe ayme, rich to be made:
Such grace now to be happy is before thee laid.'

33. 'Certes,' (sayd he) 'I n'ill¹ thine offred grace,
Ne to be made so happy doe intend:
Another blis before mine eyes I place,
Another happines, another end.

¹ Will not.

To them that list these base regards I lend;
But I in armes, and in atchievements brave,
Do rather choose my flitting houres to spend,
And to be Lord of those that riches have,
Then them to have my selfe, and be their servile slave.'

34. Thereat the feend his gnashing teeth did grate,
And griev'd so long to lacke his greedie pray;
For well he weened that so glorious bayte
Would tempt his guest to take thereof assay;
Had he so doen, he had him snatcht away,
More light then Culver in the Faulcons fist.
Eternall God thee save from such decay!
But, whenas Mammon saw his purpose mist,
Him to entrap unwares another way he wist.
35. Thence forward he him ledd, and shortly brought
Unto another rowme, whose dore forthright
To him did open, as it had beene taught.
Therein an hundred raunges weren pight,¹
And hundred founaces all burning bright:
By every founace many feendes did byde,
Deformed creatures, horrible in sight;
And every feend his busie paines applyde
To melt the golden metall, ready to be tryde.
36. One with great bellows gathered filling ayre,
And with forst wind the fewell did inflame;
Another did the dying bronds repayre
With yron tongs, and sprinckled ofte the same
With liquid waves, fiers Vulcans rage to tame,
Who, maystring them, renewd his former heat:
Some scumd the drosse that from the metall came;
Some stird the molten owre with ladles great;
And every one did swincke,² and every one did sweat.
37. But, when an earthly wight they present saw
Glistring in armes and battailous aray,
From their whot³ work they did themselves withdraw
To wonder at the sight; for till that day

¹ Fixed² Toil.³ Hot.

They never creature saw that cam that way:
 Their staring eyes sparckling with fervent fyre
 And ugly shapes did nigh the man dismay,
 That, were it not for shame, he would retyre;
 Till that him thus bespake their soveraine Lord and syre;

38. 'Behold, thou Faeries sonne, with mortall eye,
 That living eye before did never see.
 The thing, that thou didst crave so earnestly,
 To weet whence all the wealth late shewd by mee
 Proceeded, lo! now is reveald to thee.
 Here is the fountaine of the worldes good:
 Now, therefore, if thou wilt enriched bee,
 Advise thee well, and chaunge thy wilfull mood,
 Least thou perhaps hereafter wish, and be withstood.'

39. 'Suffise it then, thou Money God,' (quoth hee)
 'That all thine ydle offers I refuse.
 All that I need I have: what needeth mee
 To covet more then I have cause to use?
 With such vaine shewes thy worldlinges vyle abuse;
 But give me leave to follow mine emprise.'
 Mammon was much displeasd, yet no^{te} he chuse
 But beare the rigour of his bold mesprise;
 And thence him forward ledd him further to entise.

40. He brought him, through a darksom narrow strait,
 To a broad gate all built of beaten gold:
 The gate was open; but therein did wayt
 A sturdie villein, stryding stiffe and bold,
 As if the highest God defy he would:
 In his right hand an yron club he held,
 But he himselfe was all of golden mould,
 Yet had both life and sence, and well could weld
 That cursed weapon, when his cruell foes he queld.

41. Disdayne he called was, and did disdayne
 To be so cald, and who so did him call:
 Sterne was his looke, and full of stomacke² vayne;
 His portaunce³ terrible, and stature tall,

¹ Might he not.² Anger.³ Carriage.

Far passing th' hight of men terrestriall,
Like an huge Gyant of the Titans race;
That made him scorne all creatures great and small,
And with his pride all others powre deface:
More fitt emongst black fiends then men to have his place.

42. Soone as those glitterand armes he did espye,
That with their brightnesse made that darknes light,
His harmefull club he gan to hurtle hye,
And threaten batteill to the Faery knight;
Who likewise gan himselfe to batteill dight,¹
Till Mammon did his hasty hand withhold,
And counseld him abstaine from perilous fight;
For nothing might abash the villein bold,
Ne mortall steele emperce his miscreated mould.
43. So having him with reason pacifyde,
And that fiers Carle commaunding to forbeare,
He brought him in. The rowme was large and wyde,
As it some Gyeld² or solemne Temple weare.
Many great golden pillours did upbeare
The massy roofe, and riches huge sustayne;
And every pillour decked was full deare
With crownes, and Diademes, and titles vaine,
Which mortall Princes wore whiles they on earth did rayne.
44. A route of people there assembled were,
Of every sort and nation under skye,
Which with great uprore preaced³ to draw nere
To th' upper part, where was advaunced hye
A stately siege of soveraine majesty;
And thereon satt a woman, gorgeous gay
And richly cladd in robes of royaltie,
That never earthly Prince in such aray
His glory did enhaunce, and pompous pryde display.
45. Her face right wondrous faire did seeme to bee,
That her broad beauties beam great brightnes threw
Through the dim shade, that all men might it see:
Yet was not that same her owne native hew,

¹ Prepare.² Guild hall.³ Pressed.

But wrought by art and counterfettèd shew,
Thereby more lovers unto her to call:
Nath'lesse most heavenly faire in deed and vew
She by creation was, till she did fall;
Thenceforth she sought for helps to cloke her crime withall.

46. There, as in glistring glory she did sitt,
She held a great gold chaine ylincked well,
Whose upper end to highest heaven was knitt,
And lower part did reach to lowest Hell;
And all that preace¹ did rownd about her swell
To catchen hold of that long chaine, thereby
To climbe aloft, and others to excell:
That was Ambition, rash desire to sty,²
And every linck thereof a step of dignity.
47. Some thought to raise themselves to high degree
By riches and unrighteous reward;
Some by close shouldring; some by flatteree;
Others through friendes; others for base regard,
And all by wrong waies for themselves prepar'd:
Those that were up themselves kept others low;
Those that were low themselves held others hard,
Ne suffred them to ryse or greater grow;
But every one did strive his fellow downe to throw.
48. Which whenas Guyon saw, he gan inquire,
What meant that preace about that Ladies throne,
And what she was that did so high aspyre?
Him Mammon answered; 'That goodly one,
Whom all that folke with such contention
Doe flock about, my deare, my daughter is:
Honour and dignitie from her alone
Derived are, and all this worldes blis,
For which ye men doe strive; few gett, but many mis:
49. 'And fayre Philotime she rightly hight,
The fairest wight that wonneth under skie,
But that this darksom neather world her light
Doth dim with horror and deformity;

¹ Press.² Soar.

Worthie of heven and hye felicitie,
From whence the gods have her for envy thrust:
But, sith thou hast found favour in mine eye,
Thy spouse I will her make, if that thou lust,¹
That she may thee advance for works and merits just.'

50. 'Gramercy, Mammon,' (said the gentle knight)
'For so great grace and offred high estate;
But I, that am fraile flesh and earthly wight,
Unworthy match for such immortall mate
My selfe well wote, and mine unequall fate:
And were I not, yet is my trouth yplight,
And love avowd to other Lady late,
That to remove the same I have no might:
To chaunge love causelesse is reproch to warlike knight.'
51. Mammon emmoved was with inward wrath;
Yet, forcing it to fayne, him forth thence ledd,
Through griesly shadowes by a beaten path,
Into a gardin goodly garnished
With hearbs and fruits, whose kinds mote not be redd:
Not such as earth out of her fruitfull wombe
Throwes forth to men, sweet and well savored,
But direfull deadly black, both leafe and bloom,
Fitt to adorne the dead, and deck the drery toombe.
52. There mournfull Cypresse grew in greatest store,
And trees of bitter Gall, and Heben sad;
Dead sleeping Poppy, and black Hellebore;
Cold Coloquintida, and Tetra mad;
Mortall Samnitis, and Cicuta bad,
With which th' unjust Atheniens made to dy
Wise Socrates; who, thereof quaffing glad,
Pourd out his life and last Philosophy
To the fayre Critias, his dearest Belamy!
53. The Gardin of Proserpina this hight;
And in the midst thereof a silver seat,
With a thick Arber goodly over-dight,
In which she often usd from open heat

¹ List, please.

Her selfe to shroud, and pleasures to entreat:
Next thereunto did grow a goodly tree,
With braunches broad dispredd and body great,
Clothed with leaves, that none the wood mote see,
And loaden all with fruit as thick as it might bee.

54. Their fruit were golden apples glistring bright,
That goodly was their glory to behold;
On earth like never grew, ne living wight
Like ever saw, but they from hence were sold;
For those which Hercules, with conquest bold
Got from great Atlas daughters, hence began,
And planted there did bring forth fruit of gold;
And those with which th' Eubœan young man wan¹
Swift Atalanta, when through craft he her out ran.
55. Here also sprong that goodly golden fruit,
With which Acontius got his lover trew,
Whom he had long time sought with fruitlesse suit:
Here eke that famous golden Apple grew,
The which emongst the gods false Ate threw;
For which th' Idæan Ladies disagreed,
Till partiall Paris dempt² it Venus dew,
And had of her fayre Helen for his meed,
That many noble Greekes and Trojans made to bleed.
56. The warlike Elfe much wondred at this tree,
So fayre and great that shadowed all the ground,
And his broad braunches, laden with rich fee,
Did stretch themselves without the utmost bound
Of this great gardin, compast with a mound;
Which over-hanging they themselves did steepe
In a blacke flood, which flow'd about it round.
That is the river of Cocytus deepe,
In which full many soules do endlesse wayle and weepe.
57. Which to behold he clomb up to the bancke,
And looking downe saw many damned wightes
In those sad waves, which direfull deadly stancke,
Plonged continually of cruell Sprighes,

¹ Won.² Judged.

That with their piteous cryes, and yelling shrighthes,¹
They made the further shore resounden wide.
Emongst the rest of those same ruefull sightes,
One cursed creature he by chaunce espide,
That drenched lay full deepe under the Garden side.

58. Deepe was he drenched to the upmost chin,
Yet gaped still as coveting to drinke
Of the cold liquor which he waded in;
And stretching forth his hand did often thinke
To reach the fruit which grew upon the brincke;
But both the fruit from hand, and flood from mouth,
Did fly abacke, and made him vainely swinke;²
The whiles he sterv'd with hunger, and with drouth,
He daily dyde, yet never throughly dyen couth.³
59. The knight, him seeing labour so in vaine,
Askt who he was, and what he ment thereby?
Who, groning deepe, thus answerd him againe;
'Most cursed of all creatures under skye,
Lo! Tantalus, I here tormented lye:
Of whom high Jove wont whylome feasted bee;
Lo! here I now for want of food doe dye:
But, if that thou be such as I thee see,
Of grace I pray thee, give to eat and drinke to mee!'
60. 'Nay, nay, thou greedy Tantalus,' (quoth he)
'Abide the fortune of thy present fate;
And unto all that live in high degree,
Ensample be of mind intemperate,
To teach them how to use their present state.'
Then gan the cursed wretch alowd to cry,
Accusing highest Jove and gods ingrate;
And eke blaspheming heaven bitterly,
As author of injustice, there to let him dye.
61. He lookt a litle further, and espyde
Another wretch, whose carcas deepe was drent⁴
Within the river, which the same did hyde;
But both his handes, most filthy feculent,

¹ Shrieks.² Toil.³ Could.⁴ Drowned.

Above the water were on high extent,
And faynd to wash themselves incessantly,
Yet nothing cleaner were for such intent,
But rather fowler seemed to the eye;
So lost his labour vaine and ydle industry.

62. The knight him calling asked who he was?
Who, lifting up his head, him answerd thus;
'I Pilate am, the falsest Judge, alas!
And most unjust; that, by unrighteous
And wicked doome, to Jewes despiteous
Delivered up the Lord of life to dye,
And did acquite a murdrer felonous;
The whiles my handes I washt in purity,
The whiles my soule was soyld with fowle iniquity.'
63. Infinite moe tormented in like paine
He there beheld, too long here to be told:
Ne Mammon would there let him long remayne,
For terrour of the tortures manifold,
In which the damned soules he did behold,
But roughly him bespake: 'Thou fearefull foole,
Why takest not of that same fruite of gold?
Ne sittest downe on that same silver stoole,
To rest thy weary person in the shadow coole?'
64. All which he did to do him deadly fall
In frayle intemperaunce through sinfull bayt;
To which if he inclyned had at all,
That dreadfull feend, which did behinde him wayt,
Would him have rent in thousand peeces strayt:
But he was wary wise in all his way,
And well perceived his deceitfull sleight,
Ne suffred lust his safety to betray.
So goodly did beguile the Guyler of his pray.
65. And now he has so long remained theare,
That vitall powres gan wexe both weake and wan
For want of food and sleepe, which two upheare,
Like mightie pillours, this frayle life of man,

That none without the same endure can:
 For now three dayes of men were full outwrought,
 Since he this hardy enterprize began:
 Forthy¹ great Mammon fayrely he besought
 Into the world to guyde him backe, as he him brought.

66. The God, though loth, yet was constraýnd t' obay;
 For lenger time then that no living wight
 Below the earth might suffred be to stay:
 So backe againe him brought to living light.
 But all so soone as his enfeebled spright
 Gan sucke this vitall ayre into his brest,
 As overcome with too exceeding might,
 The life did flit away out of her nest,
 And all his sences were with deadly fit opprest.

CANTO VIII

Sir Guyon, layd in swowne, is by
 Acrates sonnes despoýld;
 Whom Arthure soone hath reskewed,
 And Paynim brethren foyld.

1. AND is there care in heaven? And is there love
 In heavenly spirits to these creatures bace,
 That may compassion of their evils move?
 There is: else much more wretched were the cace
 Of men then beasts. But O! th' exceeding grace
 Of highest God that loves his creatures so,
 And all his workes with mercy doth embrace,
 That blessed Angels he sends to and fro,
 To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe.
2. How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
 To come to succour us that succour want!
 How oft do they with golden pineons cleave
 The flitting skyes, like flying Pursuivant,
 Against fowle feendes to ayd us militant!
 They for us fight, they watch and dewly ward,
 And their bright Squadrons round about us plant;
 And all for love, and nothing for reward.
 O! why should hevenly God to men have such regard?

¹ Therefore.

3. During the while that Guyon did abide
In Mamons house, the Palmer, whom whyleare
That wanton Mayd of passage had denide,
By further search had passage found elsewhere;
And, being on his way, approched neare
Where Guyon lay in traunce; when suddeinly
He heard a voyce that called lowd and cleare,
'Come hither! hither! O, come hastily!'
That all the fields resounded with the ruefull cry.
4. The Palmer lent his eare unto the noyce,
To weet who called so importunely:
Againe he heard a more efforced voyce,
That bad him come in haste. He by and by
His feeble feet directed to the cry;
Which to that shady delve¹ him brought at last,
Where Mammon earst did sunne his threasury;
There the good Guyon he found slumbring fast
In senceles dreame; which sight at first him sore aghast.
5. Beside his head there satt a faire young man,
Of wondrous beauty and of freshest yeares,
Whose tender bud to blossome new began,
And florish faire above his equall peares:
His snowy front, curled with golden heares,
Like Phœbus face adornd with sunny rayes,
Divinely shone; and two sharpe winged sheares,
Decked with diverse plumes, like painted Jayes,
Were fixed at his backe to cut his ayery wayes.
6. Like as Cupido on Idæan hill,
When having laid his cruell bow away
And mortall arrowes, wherewith he doth fill
The world with murdrous spoiles and bloody pray,
With his faire mother he him dights to play,
And with his goodly sisters, Graces three:
The Goddesses, pleased with his wanton play,
Suffers her selfe through sleepe beguild to bee,
The whiles the other Ladies mind theyr mery glee.

¹ Recess.

7. Whom when the Palmer saw, abasht he was
Through fear and wonder that he nought could say,
Till him the childe bespoke; 'Long lackt, alas!
Hath bene thy faithfull aide in hard assay,
Whiles deadly fitt thy pupill doth dismay.
Behold this heavy sight, thou reverend Sire!
But dread of death and dolor doe away;
For life ere long shall to her home retire,
And he that breathlesse seems shal corage both respire.
8. 'The charge, which God doth unto me arrett,¹
Of his deare safety, I to thee commend;
Yet will I not forgoe, ne yet forgett
The care thereof my selfe unto the end,
But evermore him succour, and defend
Against his foe and mine: watch thou, I pray;
For evill is at hand him to offend.'
So having said, eftsoones he gan display
His painted nimble wings, and vanisht quite away.
9. The Palmer seeing his lefte empty place,
And his slow eies beguiled of their sight,
Woxe sore affraid, and standing still a space
Gaz'd after him, as fowle escapt by flight.
At last, him turning to his charge behight,²
With trembling hand his troubled pulse gan try;
Where finding life not yet dislodged quight,
He much rejoyst, and courd³ it tenderly,
As chicken newly hatcht, from dreaded destiny.
10. At last he spide where towards him did pace
Two Paynim knights al armd as bright as skie,
And them beside an aged Sire did trace,
And far before a light-foote Page did flie,
That breathed strife and troublous enmitie.
Those were the two sonnes of Acrates old,
Who, meeting earst with Archimago slie
Foreby that idle strond, of him were told
That he which earst them combattet was Guyon bold.

¹ Reckon, impute.² Ordained.³ Covered, protected.

11. Which to avenge on him they dearly vowd,
Where ever that on ground they mote him find:
False Archimage provokte their corage prowd,
And stryful Atin in their stubborne mind
Coles of contention and whot vengeance tind.¹
Now bene they come whereas the Palmer sate,
Keeping that slombred corse to him assind:
Well knew they both his person, sith of late
With him in bloody armes they rashly did debate.
12. Whom when Pyrochles saw, inflam'd with rage
That sire he fowl bespake: 'Thou dotard vile,
That with thy brutenesse shendst² thy comely age,
Abandon soone, I read, the caytive spoile
Of that same outcast carcass, that erewhile
Made it selfe famous through false trechery,
And crownd his coward crest with knightly stile;
Loe! where he now inglorious doth lye,
To proove he lived il that did thus fowly dye.'
13. To whom the Palmer fearlesse answered:
'Certes, Sir Knight, ye bene too much to blame,
Thus for to blott the honor of the dead,
And with fowle cowardize his carcass shame,
Whose living handes immortalizd his name.
Vile is the vengeance on the ashes cold,
And envy base to barke at sleeping fame.
Was never wight that treason of him told:
Your self his prowess prov'd, and found him fiers and
bold.'
14. Then sayd Cymochles: 'Palmer, thou doest dote,
Ne canst of prowess ne of knighthood deeme,
Save as thou seest or hearst. But well I wote,
That of his puissaunce tryall made extreeme:
Yet gold al is not that doth golden seeme;
Ne all good knights that shake well speare and shield.
The worth of all men by their end esteeme,
And then dew praise or dew reproch them yield;
Bad therefore I him deeme that thus lies dead on field.'

¹ Lighted.² Shamest.

15. 'Good or bad,' gan his brother fiers reply,
'What doe I recke, sith that he dide entire?
Or what doth his bad death now satisfy
The greedy hunger of revenging yre,
Sith wrathfull hand wrought not her owne desire?
Yet since no way is lefte to wreake my spight,
I will him reave of armes, the victors hire,
And of that shield, more worthy of good knight;
For why should a dead dog be deckt in armour bright?'
16. 'Fayr Sir,' said then the Palmer suppliaunt,
'For knighthoods love doe not so fowle a deed,
Ne blame your honor with so shamefull vaunt
Of vile revenge. To spoile the dead of weed
Is sacrilege, and doth all sinnes exceed:
But leave these relicks of his living might
To decke his herce, and trap his tomb-blacke steed.'
'What herce or steed' (said he) 'should he have dight,
But be entombed in the raven or the kight?'
17. With that, rude hand upon his shield he laid,
And th' other brother gan his helme unlace,
Both fiercely bent to have him disaraid;
Till that they spyde where towards them did pace
An armed knight, of bold and bounteous grace,
Whose squire bore after him an heben launce
And coverd shield. Well kend him so far space
Th' enchaunter by his armes and amenaunce,¹
When under him he saw his Lybian steed to prounce;
18. And to those brethren sayd; 'Rise, rise bylive,²
And unto batteil doe your selves addresse;
For yonder comes the prowest³ knight alive,
Prince Arthur, flowre of grace and noblesse,
That hath to Paynim knights wrought gret distresse,
And thousand Sar'zins fowly donne to dye.'
That word so deepe did in their harts impresse,
That both eftsoones upstarted furiously,
And gan themselves prepare to batteill greedily.

¹ Mien.² Quickly³ Bravest.

19. But fiers Pyrochles, lacking his owne sword,
The want thereof now greatly gan to plaine,
And Archimage besought, him that afford
Which he had brought for Braggadochio vaine.
'So would I,' (said th' enchaunter) 'glad and faine
Beteeme¹ to you this sword, you to defend,
Or ought that els your honour might maintaine;
But that this weapons powre I well have kend
To be contrary to the worke which ye intend:
20. 'For that same knights owne sword this is, of yore
Which Merlin made by his almightie art
For that his noursling, when he knighthood swore,
Therewith to doen his foes eternall smart,
The metall first he mixt with Medæwart,
That no enchauntment from his dint might save;
Then it in flames of Aetna wrought apart,
And seven times dipped in the bitter wave
Of hellish Styx, which hidden vertue to it gave.
21. 'The vertue is, that nether steele nor stone
The stroke thereof from entraunce may defend;
Ne ever may be used by his fone,²
Ne forst his rightful owner to offend;
Ne ever will it breake, ne ever bend:
Wherefore *Morddure* it rightfully is hight.³
In vaine therefore, Pyrochles, should I lend
The same to thee, against his lord to fight;
For sure yt would deceive thy labor and thy might.'
22. 'Foolish old man,' said then the Pagan wroth,
'That weenest words or charms may force withstond:
Soone shalt thou see, and then beleeeve for troth,
That I can carve with this inchaunted brond
His Lords owne flesh.' Therewith out of his hond
That vertuous steele he rudely snatcht away,
And Guyons shield about his wrest he bond:
So ready dight fierce battaile to assay,
And match his brother proud in battailous aray.

¹ Grant.² Foes.³ Called.

23. By this, that straunger knight in presence came,
And goodly salued them; who nought againe
Him answered, as courtesie became;
But with sterne lookes, and stomachous¹ disdaine,
Gave signes of grudge and discontentment vaine.
Then, turning to the Palmer, he gan spy
Where at his feet, with sorrowfull demayne
And deadly hew, an armed corse did lye,
In whose dead face he redd great magnanimity.
24. Sayd he then to the Palmer: 'Reverend Syre,
What great misfortune hath betidd this knight?
Or did his life her fatall date expyre,
Or did he fall by treason, or by fight?
How ever, sure I rew his pitteous plight.'
'Not one, nor other,' sayd the Palmer grave,
'Hath him befallne; but cloudes of deadly night
A while his heavy eyelids cover'd have,
And all his senses drowned in deep sencelesse wave:
25. 'Which those his cruell foes, that stand hereby,
Making advauntage,*to revenge their spight,
Would him disarm and treaten shamefully;
Unworthie usage of redoubted knight.
But you, faire Sir, whose honourable sight
Doth promise hope of helpe and timely grace,
Mote I beseech to succour his sad plight,
And by your powre protect his feeble cace?
First prayse of knighthood is fowle outrage to deface.'
26. 'Palmer,' (said he) 'no knight so rude, I weene,
As to doen outrage to a sleeping ghost;
Ne was there ever noble corage seene,
That in advauntage would his puissaunce bost:
Honour is least where oddes appeareth most.
May bee, that better reason will aswage
The rash revengers heat. Words, well dispost,
Have secrete powre t' appease inflamed rage:
If not, leave unto me thy knights last patronage.'

¹ Angry.

27. Tho,' turning to those brethren, thus bespoke:
 'Ye warlike payre, whose valorous great might,
 It seemes, just wronges to vengeaunce doe provoke,
 To wreake your wrath on this dead seeming knight,
 Mote ought allay the storme of your despight,
 And settle patience in so furious heat?
 Not to debate the chalenge of your right,
 But for his carkas pardon I entreat,
 Whom fortune hath already laid in lowest seat.'
28. To whom Cymochles said; 'For what art thou,
 That mak'st thy selfe his dayes-man,² to prolong
 The vengeaunce prest³? Or who shall let⁴ me now
 On this vile body from to wreak my wrong,
 And made his carkas as the outcast dong?
 Why should not that dead carrion satisfye
 The guilt which, if he lived had thus long,
 His life for dew revenge should deare aby⁵?
 The trespass still doth live, albee the person dye.'
29. 'Indeed,' then said the Prince, 'the evill donne
 Dyes not, when breath the body first doth leave;
 But from the grandsyre to the Nephewes sonne,
 And all his seede the curse doth often cleave,
 Till vengeaunce utterly the guilt bereave:
 So streightly God doth judge. But gentle Knight
 That doth against the dead his hand upheave,
 His honour staines with rancour and despight,
 And great disparagment makes to his former might.'
30. Pyrochles gan reply the second tyme,
 And to him said: 'Now, felon, sure I read,
 How that thou art partaker of his cryme:
 Therefore, by Termagaunt thou shalt be dead.'
 With that his hand, more sad then lomp of lead,
 Uplifting high, he weened with Morddure,
 His owne good sword Morddure, to cleave his head.
 The faithfull steele such treason no'uld⁶ endure,
 But, swarving from the marke, his Lordes life did assure.

¹ Then.⁴ Prevent.² Umpire.⁵ Pay for.³ Prepared.⁶ Would not.

31. Yet was the force so furious and so fell,
That horse and man it made to reele asyde:
Nath'lesse the Prince would not forsake his sell,¹
For well of yore he learned had to ryde,
But full of anger fiersly to him cryde;
'False traitour! miscreaunt! thou broken hast
The law of armes to strike foe undefide:
But thou thy treasons fruit, I hope, shalt taste
Right sowre, and feele the law the which thou hast defast.'
32. With that his balefull speare he fiercely bent
Against the Pagans brest, and therewith thought
His cursed life out of her lodge have rent;
But ere the point arrived where it ought,
That seven fold shield, which he from Guyon brought,
He cast between to ward the bitter stownd:
Through all those foldes the steelehead passage wrought,
And through his shoulder perst; wherwith to ground
He groveling fell, all gored in his gushing wound.
33. Which when his brother saw, fraught with great grieve
And wrath, he to him leaped furiously,
And fowly saide: 'By Mahoune, cursed thiefe,
That direfull stroke thou dearely shalt aby²:'
Then, hurling up his harmefull blade on hy,
Smote him so hugely on his haughtie crest,
That from his saddle forced him to fly;
Els mote³ it needes downe to his manly brest
Have cleft his head in twaine, and life thence dispossesst.
34. Now was the Prince in daungerous distresse,
Wanting his sword when he on foot should fight:
His single speare could doe him small redresse
Against two foes of so exceeding might,
The least of which was match for any knight.
And now the other, whom he earst did daunt,
Had reard him selfe againe to cruel fight
Three times more furious and more puissaunt,
Unmindfull of his wound, of his fate ignoraunt.

¹ Saddle.² Pay for.³ Must.

35. So both attonce him charge on either syde
With hideous strokes and importable¹ powre,
That forced him his ground to traverse wyde,
And wisely watch to ward that deadly stowre²;
For in his shield, as thicke as stormie showre,
Their strokes did raine: yet did he never quaile,
Ne backward shrink, but as a stedfast towre,
Whom foe with double battry doth assaile,
Them on her bulwarke beares, and bids them nought availe
36. So stoutly he withstood their strong assay;
Till that at last, when he advantage spyde,
His poynant speare he thrust with puissant sway
At proud Cymochles, whiles his shield was wyde,
That through his thigh the mortall steele did gryde³:
He, swarving with the force, within his flesh
Did breake the launce, and let the head abyde.
Out of the wound the red blood flowed fresh,
That underneath his feet soone made a purple plesh.⁴
37. Horribly then he gan to rage and rayle,
Cursing his Gods, and him selfe damning deepe:
Als when his brother saw the red blood rayle⁵
Adowne so fast, and all his armour steepe,
For very felnesse⁶ lowd he gan to weepe,
And said; 'Caytive, curse on thy cruell hond,
That twise hath spedd; yet shall it not thee keepe
From the third brunt of this my fatall brond:
Lo! where the dreadfull Death behynd thy backe doth
stond.'
38. With that he strooke, and thother strooke withall,
That nothing seemd mote beare so monstrous might:
The one upon his covered shield did fall,
And glauncing downe would not his owner byte;
But thother did upon his troncheon⁷ smyte;
Which hewing quite asunder, further way
It made, and on his hacqueton⁸ did lyte,
The which dividing with importune sway,
It seizd in his right side, and there the dint did stay.

¹ Unbearable.² Attack.³ Pierce.⁴ Pool.⁵ Flow.⁶ Fierceness.⁷ Staff.⁸ Leather jacket.

39. Wyde was the wound, and a large lukewarme flood,
Red as the Rose, thence gushed grievously;
That when the Paynym spyde the streaming blood,
Gave him great hart and hope of victory.
On th' other side, in huge perplexity
The Prince now stood, having his weapon broke;
Nought could he hurt, but still at warde did ly:
Yet with his troncheon he so rudely stroke
Cymochles twise, that twise him forst his foot revoke.
40. Whom when the Palmer saw in such distresse,
Sir Guyon's sword he lightly to him raught,
And said; 'Fayre Sonne, great God thy right hand blesse,
To use that sword so well as he it ought!'
Glad was the knight, and with fresh courage fraught,
When as againe he armed felt his hond:
Then like a Lyon, which hath long time saught¹
His robbed whelpes, and at the last them fond
Emongst the shepeheard swaynes, then wexeth wood² and
yond³:
41. So fierce he laid about him, and dealt blowes
On either side, that neither mayle could hold,
Ne shield defend the thunder of his throwes:
Now to Pyrochles many strokes he told;
Eft to Cymochles twise so many fold;
Then, backe againe turning his busie hond,
Them both atonce compeld with courage bold
To yield wide way to his hart-thrilling brond;
And though they both stood stiffe, yet could not both
withstond.
42. As salvage Bull, whom two fierce mastives bayt,
When rancour doth with rage him once engore,
Forgets with wary warde them to awayt,
But with his dreadfull hornes them drives afore,
Or flings aloft, or treads downe in the flore,
Breathing out wrath, and bellowing disdaine,
That all the forest quakes to heare him rore:
So rag'd Prince Arthur twixt his foemen twaine,
That neither could his mightie puissaunce sustaine.

¹ Sought.² Crazy.³ Mad.

43. But ever at Pyrochles when he smitt,
 (Who Guyons shield cast ever him before,
 Whereon the Faery Queenes pourtract was writt,)
 His hand relented and the stroke forbore,
 And his deare hart the picture gan adore;
 Which oft the Paynim sav'd from deadly stowre¹;
 But him henceforth the same can save no more;
 For now arrived is his fatall howre,
 That no'te² avoyded be by earthly skill or powre.
44. For when Cymochles saw the fowle reproch,
 Which them appeached³, prickt with guiltie shame
 And inward grieve, he fiercely gan approach,
 Resolv'd to put away that loathly blame,
 Or dye with honour and desert of fame;
 And on the haubergh⁴ stroke the Prince so sore,
 That quite disparted all the linked frame,
 And pierced to the skin, but bit no more;
 Yet made him wise to reele, that never moov'd afore.
45. Whereat renfierst⁵ with wrath and sharp regret,
 He stroke so hugely with his borrowd blade,
 That it empierst the Pagans burganet⁶;
 And, cleaving the hard steele, did deepe invade
 Into his head, and cruell passage made
 Quite through his brayne. He, tombling downe on ground,
 Breathd out his ghost, which, to th' infernall shade
 Fast flying, there eternall torment found
 For all the sinnes wherewith his lewd life did abound.
46. Which when his german⁷ saw, the stony feare
 Ran to his hart, and all his sence dismayd,
 Ne thenceforth life ne corage did appeare;
 But as a man whom hellish feendes have frayd,
 Long tremling still he stooode: at last thus sayd;
 'Traytour, what hast thou doen? How ever may
 Thy cursed hand so cruelly have swayd
 Against that knight! Harrow and well away⁸!
 After so wicked deede why liv'st thou lenger day?'

¹ Blow.² May not.³ Accused.⁴ Coat of mail.⁵ Reënforced.⁶ Helmet.⁷ Brother.⁸ Alack and alas!

47. With that all desperate, as loathing light,
And with revenge desyring soone to dye,
Assembling all his force and utmost might,
With his owne swerd he fierce at him did flye,
And strooke, and foynd,¹ and lasht outrageously,
Withouten reason or regard. Well knew
The Prince, with pacience and sufferance sly
So hasty heat soone cooled to subdew:
Tho,² when this breathlesse woxe, that batteil gan renew.
48. As when a windy tempest bloweth hye,
That nothing may withstand his stormy stowre,
The clowdes, as thinges affrayd, before him flye;
But all so soone as his outrageous powre
Is layd, they fiercely then begin to showre;
And, as in scorne of his spent stormy spight,
Now all attonce their malice forth do poure:
So did Prince Arthur beare himselfe in fight,
And suffred rash Pyrochles waste his ydle might.
49. At last, when as the Sarazin perceiv'd
How that straunge sword refusd to serve his neede,
But when he stroke most strong the dint deceiv'd,
He flong it from him; and, devoyd of dreed,
Upon him lightly leaping without heed
Twixt his two mighty armes engrasped fast,
Thinking to overthrowe and downe him tred:
But him in strength and skill the Prince surpast,
And through his nimble sleight did under him down cast.
50. Nought booted it the Paynim then to strive;
For as a Bittur³ in the Eagles clawe,
That may not hope by flight to scape alive,
Still waytes for death with dread and trembling aw;
So he, now subject to the victours law,
Did not once move, nor upward cast his eye,
For vile disdaine and rancour, which did gnaw
His hart in twaine with sad melancholy;
As one that loathed life, and yet despyd to dye.

¹ Lunged.² Then.³ Small heron.

CANTO XII

Guyon, by Palmers governaunce,
 Passing through perilles great,
 Doth overthrow the Bowre of blis,
 And Acrasy defeat.

* * * * *

42. Thence passing forth, they shortly doe arryve
 Whereas the Bowre of Blisse was situate;
 A place pickt out by choyce of best alyve,
 That natures worke by art can imitate:
 In which whatever in this worldly state
 Is sweete and pleasing unto living sense,
 Or that may dayntest fantasy aggrate,¹
 Was poured forth with plentifull dispence,
 And made there to abound with lavish affluence.
43. Goodly it was enclosed rownd about,
 As well their entred guestes to keep within,
 As those unruly beasts to hold without;
 Yet was the fence thereof but weake and thin:
 Nought feard theyr force that fortilage² to win,
 But wisdomes powre, and temperaunces might,
 By which the mightiest things efforced bin:
 And eke the gate was wrought of substaunce light,
 Rather for pleasure then for battery or fight.
44. Yt framed was of precious yvory,
 That seemd a worke of admirable witt;
 And therein all the famous history
 Of Jason and Medæa was ywritt;
 Her mighty charmes, her furious loving fitt³;
 His goodly conquest of the golden fleece,
 His falsed fayth, and love too lightly flitt;
 The wondred Argo, which in venturous peece⁴
 First through the Euxine seas bore all the flowr of Greece.

¹ Please.² Outwork.³ Passion.⁴ Ship.

45. Ye might have seene the frothy billowes fry
 Under the ship as thorough them she went,
 That seemd the waves were into yvory,
 Or yvory into the waves were sent;
 And otherwhere the snowy substaunce sprent¹
 With vermell, like the boyes blood therein shed,
 A piteous spectacle did represent;
 And otherwhiles, with gold besprinkeled,
 Yt seemd thenchaunted flame which did Crēusa wed.

46. All this and more might in that goodly gate
 Be red, that ever open stood to all
 Which thither came; but in the Porch there sate
 A comely personage of stature tall,
 And semblaunce pleasing, more then naturall,
 That travellers to him seemd to entize:
 His looser garment to the ground did fall,
 And flew about his heeles in wanton wize,
 Not fitt for speedy pace, or manly exercise.

47. They in that place him Genius did call:
 Not that celestially powre, to whom the care
 Of life, and generation of all
 That lives, pertaines in charge particulare,
 Who wondrous things concerning our welfare,
 And straunge phantomes doth lett us ofte foresee,
 And ofte of secret ill bids us beware:
 That is our Selfe, whom though we do not see,
 Yet each doth in him selfe it well perceive to bee.

* * * * *

49. With diverse flowres he daintily was deckt,
 And strowed rownd about; and by his side
 A mighty Mazer² bowle of wine was sett,
 As if it had to him bene sacrificide,
 Wherewith all new-come guests he gratyfide:
 So did he eke Sir Guyon passing by;
 But he his ydle curtesie defide,
 And overthrew his bowle disdainfully,
 And broke his staffe with which he charmed semblants³ sly.

¹ Sprinkled.

² Drinking-cup.

³ Phantoms.

50. Thus being entred, they behold arownd
A large and spacious plaine, on every side,
Strowed with pleasauns¹; whose fayre grassy grownd
Mantled with greene, and goodly beautifide
With all the ornaments of Floraes pride,
Wherewith her mother Art, as halfe in scorne
Of niggard Nature, like a pompous bride
Did decke her, and too lavishly adorne,
When forth from virgin bowre she comes in th' early morne.
51. Therewith the Heavens alwayes joviall
Lookte on them lovely, still in stedfast state,
Ne suffred storme nor frost on them to fall,
Their tender buds or leaves to violate;
Nor scorching heat, nor cold intemperate,
T' afflict the creatures which therein did dwell;
But the milde ayre with season moderate
Gently attempred, and disposd so well,
That still it breathed forth sweet spirit and holesom smell:
52. More sweet and wholesome then the pleasaunt hill
Of Rhodope, on which the Nimphe that bore
A gyaunt babe herselfe for grieve did kill;
Or the Thessalian Tempe, where of yore
Fayre Daphne Phœbus hart with love did gore;
Or Ida, where the Gods lov'd to repayre,
When ever they their heavenly bowres forlore²;
Or sweet Parnasse, the haunt of Muses fayre;
Or Eden selfe, if ought with Eden mote compayre.
53. Much wondred Guyon at the fayre aspect
Of that sweet place, yet suffred no delight
To sincke into his sence, nor mind affect,
But passed forth and lookt still forward right,
Brydling his will and maystering his might,
Till that he came unto another gate;
No gate, but like one, being goodly dight
With bowes and braunches, which did broad dilate
Their clasping armes in wanton wreathings intricate:

¹ Delights.² Left.

54. So fashioned a Porch with rare device
Archt over head with an embracing vine,
Whose bounces hanging downe seemd to entice
All passers by to taste their lushious wine,
And did them selves into their hands incline,
As freely offering to be gathered;
Some deepe empurpled as the Hyacine,
Some as the Rubine laughing sweetely red,
Some like faire Emeraudes, not yet well ripened.
55. And them amongst some were of burnisht gold,
So made by art to beautify the rest,
Which did themselves emongst the leaves enfold,
As lurking from the vew of covetous guest,
That the weake boughes, with so rich load opprest
Did bow adowne as overburdened.
Under that Porch a comely dame did rest
Clad in fayre weedes but fowle disordered,
And garments loose that seemd unmeet for womanhed.
56. In her left hand a Cup of gold she held,
And with her right the riper fruit did reach,
Whose sappy liquor, that with fulnesse sweld,
Into her cup she scruzd¹ with daintie breach²
Of her fine fingers, without fowle empeach,³
That so faire winepresse made the wine more sweet:
Thereof she usd to give to drinke to each,
Whom passing by she happened to meet:
It was her guise⁴ all Straungers goodly so to greet.
57. So she to Guyon offred it to tast,
Who, taking it out of her tender hond,
The cup to ground did violently cast,
That all in peeces it was broken fond,
And with the liquor stained all the lond:
Whereat Excesse exceedingly was wroth,
Yet no'te⁵ the same amend, ne yet withstond,
But suffered him to passe, all were she loth;
Who, nought regarding her displeasure, forward goth.

¹ Squeezed. ² Breaking. ³ Hindrance. ⁴ Custom. ⁵ Might not.

58. There the most daintie Paradise on ground
It selfe doth offer to his sober eye,
In which all pleasures plenteously abownd,
And none does others happinesse envye;
The painted flowres, the trees upshooting hye,
The dales for shade, the hilles for breathing space,
The trembling groves, the christall running by,
And, that which all faire workes doth most aggrace,
The art which all that wrought appeared in no place.
59. One would have thought, (so cunningly the rude
And scorned partes were mingled with the fine)
That nature had for wantonesse ensude
Art, and that Art at nature did repine;
So striving each th' other to undermine,
Each did the others worke more beautify;
So diff'ring both in willes agreed in fine:
So all agreed, through sweete diversity,
This Gardin to adorne with all variety.
60. And in the midst of all a fountaine stood,
Of richest substance that on earth might bee,
So pure and shiny that the silver flood
Through every channell running one might see;
Most goodly it with curious ymageree
Was overwrought, and shapes of naked boyes,
Of which some seemd with lively jollitee
To fly about, playing their wanton toyes,
Whylest others did them selves embay¹ in liquid joyes.
61. And over all of purest gold was spread
A trayle of yvie in his native hew;
For the rich metall was so coloured,
That wight who did not well avis'd it vew
Would surely deeme it to bee yvie trew:
Low his lascivious armes adown did creepe,
That themselves dipping in the silver dew
Their fleecy flowres they fearefully did steepe,
Which drops of Christall seemd for wantones to weep.

¹ Bathe.

62. Infinit streames continually did well
Out of this fountaine, sweet and faire to see,
The which into an ample laver fell,
And shortly grew to so great quantitie,
That like a litle lake it seemd to bee;
Whose depth exceeded not three cubits hight,
That through the waves one might the bottom see,
All pav'd beneath with Jaspar shining bright,
That seemd the fountaine in that sea did sayle upright.

* * * * *

70. Eftsoones they heard a most melodious sound,
Of all that mote delight a daintie eare,
Such as attonce might not on living ground,
Save in this Paradise, be heard elsewhere:
Right hard it was for wight which did it heare,
To read what manner musicke that mote bee;
For all that pleasing is to living eare
Was there consorted in one harmonee;
Birdes, voices, instruments, windes, waters, all agree:

71. The joyous birdes, shrouded in chearefull shade
Their notes unto the voice attempred sweet;
Th' Angelicall soft trembling voyces made
To th' instruments divine responce meet;
The silver sounding instruments did meet
With the base murmure of the waters fall;
The waters fall with difference discreet,
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call;
The gentle warbling wind low answered to all.

* * * * *

74. The whiles some one did chaunt this lovely lay:
Ah! see, whoso fayre thing doest faine to see,
In springing flowre the image of thy day.
Ah! see the Virgin Rose, how sweetly shee
Doth first peepe foorth with bashfull modestee,
That fairer seemes the lesse ye see her may.
Lo! see soone after how more bold and free
Her bared bosome she doth broad display;
Lo! see soone after how she fades and falls away.

75. So passeth, in the passing of a day,
 Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre;
 Ne more doth florish after first decay,
 That earst was sought to deck both bed and bowre
 Of many a lady,' and many a Paramowre.¹
 Gather therefore the Rose whilst yet is prime,
 For sonne comes age that will her pride deflowre;
 Gather the Rose of love whilst yet is time,
 Whilst loving thou mayst loved be with equall crime.²
76. He ceast; and then gan all the quire of birdes
 Their diverse notes t'attune unto his lay,
 As in approvaunce of his pleasing wordes.
 The constant payre heard all that he did say,
 Yet swarved³ not, but kept their forward way
 Through many covert groves and thickets close,
 In which they creeping did at last display
 That wanton Lady with her lover lose,
 Whose sleepe head she in her lap did soft dispose.

* * * * *

81. The noble Elfe and carefull Palmer drew
 So nigh them, minding nought but lustfull game,
 That suddein forth they on them rusht, and threw
 A subtile net, which only for that same
 The skilfull Palmer formall⁴ did frame:
 So held them under fast; the whiles the rest
 Fled all away for feare of fowler shame,
 The faire Enchauntresse, so unwares opprest,
 Tryde all her arts and all her sleights thence out to wrest.
82. And eke her lover strove, but all in vaine;
 For, that same net so cunningly was wound,
 That neither guile nor force might it distraine.
 They tooke them both, and both them strongly bound
 In captive bandes, which there they readie found:
 But her in chaines of adamant he tyde;
 For nothing else might keepe her safe and sound:
 But Verdant (so he hight) he soone untyde,
 And counsell sage in steed thereof to him applyde.

¹ Lover.² Requital.³ Swerved.⁴ Expressly.

83. But all those pleasaunt bowres, and Pallace brave,
Guyon broke downe with rigour pittillesse;
Ne ought their goodly workmanship might save
Them from the tempest of his wrathfulnesse,
But that their blisse he turn'd to balefulnesse.
Their groves he feld; their gardins did deface;
Their arbers spoyle; their Cabinets suppresses;
Their banket¹ houses burne; their buildings race;
And, of the fayrest late, now made the fowlest place.

¹ Banquet.

BOOK III

CANTO II

[Britomart, a maiden disguised as a knight, seeks Arthegall, her lover.]

* * * * *

18. By straunge occasion she did him behold,
And much more straungely gan to love his sight,
As it in bookes hath written beene of old.
In Deheubarth, that now South-wales is hight,
What time king Ryence raign'd and dealed right,
The great Magitien Merlin had deviz'd,
By his deepe science and hell-dreaded might,
A looking glasse, right wondrously aguiz'd,¹
Whose vertues through the wyde worlde soone were
solemniz'd.
19. It vertue had to shew in perfect sight
Whatever thing was in the world contaynd,
Betwixt the lowest earth and hevens hight,
So that it to the looker appertaynd:
Whatever foe had wrought, or frend had faynd,
Therein discovered was, ne ought mote pas,
Ne ought in secret from the same remaynd;
Forthy² it round and hollow shaped was,
Like to the world itselfe, and seemd a world of glas.
20. Who wonders not, that reades so wonderous worke?
But who does wonder, that has red the Towre
Wherein th' Aegyptian Phao long did lurke
From all mens vew, that none might her discoure,³

¹ Adorned.

² Therefore.

³ Discover.

Yet she might all men vew out of her bowre?
Great Ptolomæe it for his lemans sake
Ybuilded all of glasse, by Magicke powre,
And also it impregnable did make;
Yet when his love was false he with a peaze¹ it brake.

21. Such was the glassy globe that Merlin made,
And gave unto king Ryence for his gard,
That never foes his kingdome might invade,
But he it knew at home before he hard²
Tydings thereof, and so them still debar'd.
It was a famous Present for a Prince,
And worthy worke of infinite reward,
That treasons could bewray, and foes convince:
Happy this Realme, had it remayned ever since!

22. One day it fortun'd fayre Britomart
Into her fathers closet to repayre;
For nothing he from her reserv'd apart,
Being his onely daughter and his hayre;
Where when she had espyde that mirrhour fayre,
Her selfe awhile therein she vewd in vaine:
Tho,³ her avizing of the vertues rare
Which thereof spoken were, she gan againe
Her to bethinke of that mote to her selfe pertaine.

23. But as it falleth, in the gentlest harts
Imperious Love hath highest set his throne,
And tyrannizeth in the bitter smarts
Of them that to him buxome⁴ are and prone:
So thought this Mayd (as maydens use to done)
Whom fortune for her husband would allot:
Not that she lusted after any one,
For she was pure from blame of sinfull blott;
Yet wist her life at last must lincke in that same knot.

24. Eftsoones there was presented to her eye
A comely knight, all arm'd in complete wize,
Through whose bright ventayle, lifted up on hye,
His manly face, that did his foes agrize,⁵

¹ Blow.² Heard.³ Then.⁴ Obedient.⁵ Terrify.

And frends to termes of gentle truce entize,¹
 Lookt foorth, as Phœbus face out of the east
 Betwixt two shady mountaynes doth arize:
 Portly his person was, and much increast
 Through his Heroicke grace and honorable gest.²

25. His crest was covered with a couchant Hownd,
 And all his armour seemd of antique mould,
 But wondrous massy and assured sownd,
 And round about yfretted all with gold,
 In which there written was, with cyphres old,
Achilles armes, which Arthegall did win:
 And on his shield enveloped sevenfold
 He bore a crowned little Ermelin,³
 That deckt the azure field with her fayre pouldred skin.
26. The Damzell well did vew his Personage
 And liked well, ne further fastned not,
 But went her way; ne her unguilty age
 Did weene, unwares, that her unlucky lot
 Lay hidden in the bottome of the pot.
 Of hurt unwist most daunger doth redound;
 But the false Archer, which that arrow shot
 So slyly that she did not feele the wound,
 Did smyle full smoothly at her weetlesse wofull stound.⁴
27. Thenceforth the fether in her lofty crest,
 Ruffed of love, gan lowly to availe⁵;
 And her prowd portaunce and her princely gest,
 With which she earst triumphed, now did quaille:
 Sad, solemne, sowre, and full of fancies fraile,
 She woxe; yet wist she nether how, nor why.
 She wist not, silly Mayd, what she did aile,
 Yet wist she was not well at ease perdy;
 Yet thought it was not love, but some melancholy.

¹ Entice.² Achievement.³ Ermine.⁴ Astonishment.⁵ Fall.

BOOK IV

CANTO VI

[Arthegall meets Britomart and fights with her, not knowing who she is.]

* * * * *

19. The wicked stroke upon her helmet chaunst,
And with the force, whiche in it selfe it bore,
Her ventayle¹ shard away, and thence forth glaunst
Adowne in vaine, ne harm'd her any more.
With that her angels face, unseene afore,
Like to the ruddie morne appeard in sight,
Deawed with silver drops through sweating sore,
But somewhat redder then beseem'd aright,
Through toylesome heate and labour of her weary fight.
20. And round about the same her yellow heare,
Having through stirring loosd their wonted band,
Like to a golden border did appeare,
Framed in goldsmithes forge with cunning hand:
Yet goldsmithes cunning could not understand
To frame such subtile wire, so shinie cleare;
For it did glister like the golden sand,
The which Pactolus with his waters shere²
Throwes forth upon the rivage round about him nere.
21. And as his hand he up againe did reare,
Thinking to worke on her his utmost wracke,³
His powrelesse arme, benumbd with secret feare,
From his revengefull purpose shronke abacke,

¹ Front of the helmet.

² Bright.

³ Destruction.

And cruell sword out of his fingers slacke
 Fell downe to ground; as if the steele had sence,
 And felt some ruth or sence his hand did lacke,
 Or both of them did thinke obedience
 To doe to so divine a beauties excellence.

22. And he himselfe, long gazing thereupon,
 At last fell humbly downe upon his knee,
 And of his wonder made religion,
 Weening some heavenly goddesse he did see,
 Or else unweeting what it else might bee;
 And pardon her besought his error frayle,
 That had done outrage in so high degree:
 Whilest trembling horror did his sense assayle,
 And made ech member quake, and manly hart to quayle.

* * * * *

26. When Britomart with sharpe avizefull¹ eye
 Beheld the lovely face of Artegall
 Tempred with sternesse and stout majestie,
 She gan eftsoones it to her mind to call
 To be the same which in her fathers hall
 Long since in that enchaunted glasse she saw;
 Therewith her wrathfull courage gan appall,²
 And haughtie spirits meekely to adaw,³
 That her enhaunced hand she downe can soft withdraw.

[The knights cease fighting, and are reconciled.]

39. Therewith he rested, and well pleased was:
 So, peace being confirm'd amongst them all,
 They tooke their steeds, and forward thence did pas
 Unto some resting place, which mote befall,
 All being guided by Sir Artegall:
 Where goodly solace was unto them made,
 And dayly feasting both in bowre and hall,
 Untill that they their wounds well healed had,
 And wearie limmes recur'd after late usage bad.

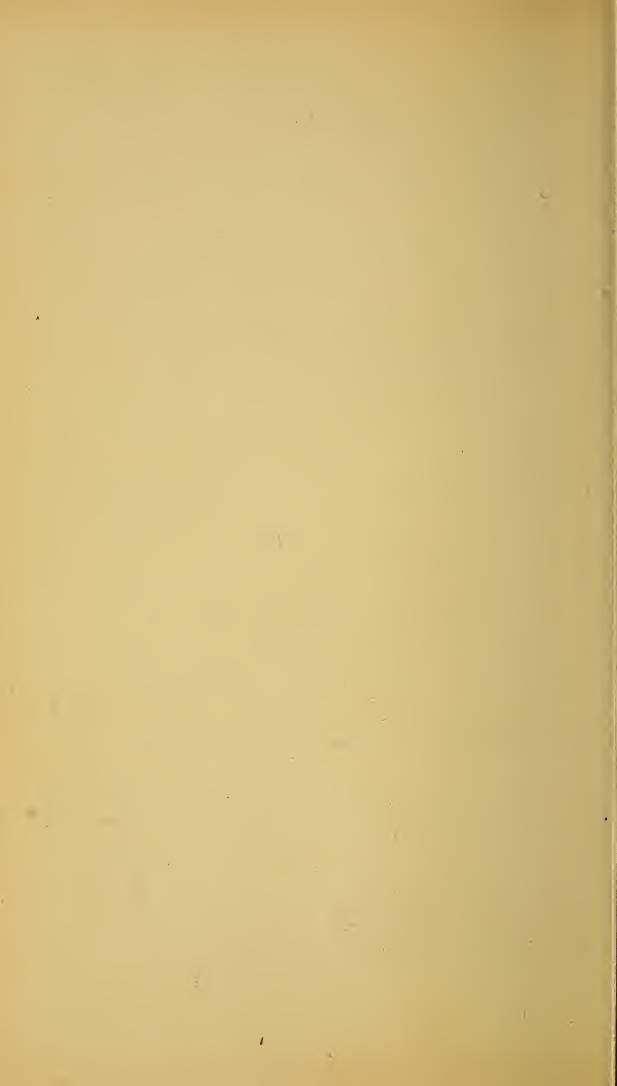
¹ Watchful.

² Weaken.

³ Subdue.

40. In all which time Sir Artegall made way
Unto the love of noble Britomart,
And with meeke service and much suit did lay
Continuall siege unto her gentle hart;
Which, being whylome launcht¹ with lovely dart,
More eath² was new impression to receive;
How ever she her paynd with womanish art
To hide her wound, that none might it perceive:
Vaine is the art that seekes it selfe for to deceive.
41. So well he woo'd her, and so well he wrought her,
With faire entreatie and sweet blandishment.
That at the length unto a bay he brought her,
So as she to his speeches was content
To lend an eare, and softly to relent.
At last, through many vowes which forth he pour'd,
And many othes, she yeelded her consent
To be his love, and take him for her Lord,
Till they with mariage meet might finish that accord.

¹ Pierced.² Easy.



NOTES

BOOK I

CANTO I

[The numbers in bold-faced type refer to the stanzas.]

AFTER the introduction of Una and the knight, we have the adventure in the Wandering Wood, and Archimago's first treachery — the real beginning of the story. The adventure in the Wandering Wood represents a normal accident of life: the knight loses his path through a natural mistake, without fault of his own or positive temptation, except as the conditions of human life are temptations. When he recognizes Error, he conquers it and regains his path. The episode furnishes a contrast and an introduction to the story of Archimago, the spirit of aggressive evil, positive temptation in the world. The incidents have their sequence in the knight's states of mind; at the moment of his victory, when he is most off his guard, Archimago deceives him. The fine picture of the house of Morpheus is, of course, drawn for its own sake, rather than as a link in the story.

1. *A gentle knight*: St. George, in whom Spenser idealizes his friend, the Earl of Leicester. For his armor and the origin of his quest, see the letter to Sir Walter Raleigh (page 169). *Many' a bloody field*: The apostrophe denotes elision.

2. *But of his cheere*: He bears no scars of external warfare; his real life is in thoughts and ideals, which leave their mark in the expression of his face.

3. *Gloriana*: Queen Elizabeth. *A Dragon*: Satan.

4. *A lovely Ladie*: Una, impersonating Truth — singleness of heart, in contrast to the duplicity and complexity of falsehood. The veil she wears helps to realize the sacredness of Truth, and the poet avoids the necessity of describing her face. Her beauty is always expressed indirectly, in its effect on others. The ass represents Humility; the lamb, Innocence. The attendant dwarf represents common sense.

8, 9. Read aloud this catalogue of the trees, and notice the sweetness of the lines — a good example of Spenser's wonderful music. He is trying to render in sound the charm of the Wandering Wood, as it appealed to Una and the knight. Notice also the felicity of the concisely phrased epithets; they seem inevitable, like the language of proverbs. Spenser here imitates Chaucer, *Parlement of Foules*, 176-182.

11. *A hollowe cave*: Spenser's landscape, of course, contributes to the allegory. Sin of any kind hides from the open light. Cf. Error's cave with the cave of Despair, Canto ix.

12. *And perill without show* : Una is always more wary than the knight against hidden danger. Spenser means the finer instinct to belong to her as a woman, as well as to the nature of Truth. *Virtue gives her selfe light* : imitated by Milton, —

Virtue could see to do what virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. — *Comus*, 372.

13. '*Fly, fly !*' *quoth then the fearefull Dwarfe* : the warning of common sense.

19. Besides the inspiration of Truth, Spenser here indicates the chivalric inspiration of womanhood. Una later not only encourages but even rescues the knight.

20–27. Error here represents chiefly religious and political rebellion. The brutal realism of the passage, so out of harmony with Spenser's usual refinement of mood, is a mediæval survival.

29. *An aged Sire* : Archimago, Hypocrisy; Spenser probably means Philip II of Spain. Note the contrast of this quiet passage with the preceding episode.

32. '*Far hence*' (*quoth he*) : Archimago makes up the story of the 'straunge man'; when the knight is eager to follow that quest, and so may escape him, Archimago hastens to describe the quest as remote and difficult.

34. *Did gently play* : Spenser's descriptions are rarely without sound. In the Wandering Wood the birds sing; here the voice of the picture is the brook.

36. *Morpheus* : the god of sleep.

37. *Plutoes griesly dame* : Proserpina. *Great Gorgon* : Demogorgon, an evil spirit invoked by mediæval conjurers. *Cocytus*, *Styx* : the rivers of lamentation and of hate, in the lower world.

39. *Tethys* : the wife of Oceanus. *Cynthia* : Diana, the moon.

40. *Whose double gates* : Cf. Virgil, *Æneid*, vi, 893. Through the ivory gate came the false dreams; through the silver gate, the true.

41. *A trickling streame* : Notice, as in st. 34, how the element of sound in the picture is supplied by the brook, the rain, the bees; the verse itself gives the effect of drowsiness. Cf. Chaucer:

This messenger took leve and wente
Upon his wey, and never ne stente
Til he com to the derke valeye
That stant bytwene roches tweye,
Ther never yet grew corn ne gras,
Ne tree, ne nothing that ought was,
Beste, ne man, ne nothing elles,
Save ther were a fewe welles
Came renning fro the clifles adoun,

That made a deedly sleping soun,
 And ronnen doun right by a cave
 That was under a rokke y-grave
 Amid the valey, wonder depe.
 Ther thise goddes laye and slepe,
 Morpheus. — *Book of the Duchesse*, 153-167.

43. *Hecate* : the name of Proserpina as Queen of Hades.
 44. *By the Yvorie dore* : because the dream was false. See note, st. 40.

CANTO II

When the Red Cross knight, deceived by Archimago, deserts Una (Truth), he has no longer a quest, and falls into the hands of the enemies of Holiness. From that moment Una seeks her champion, to discover the cause of his defection and to recall him to his quest. Canto ii contains two episodes. The overthrow of Sansfoy is the knight's first victory in human warfare; the ease of it shows for the last time the might of his arms before he comes into Duessa's power. The episode of Fradubio is a warning to him, from the experience of another; if he had not become blind, from the loss of Truth, he would have seen that his adventure with Duessa so far was practically the same as Fradubio's.

6. *Hesperus* : the evening star, here standing for the night.
 7. *Tithones* : Tithonus, the human lover of Aurora. The gods gave him immortality, but not immortal youth. *Titan* : the sun.

10. *Proteus* : a sea-god, who could assume any shape.

12. *Will was his guide* : the object of Archimago's devices and the cause of the knight's defeat: he follows wilful passion, not Truth. *Sarazin* : a Saracen, a pagan.

13. *A goodly Lady* : Duessa (false faith), disguised as Fidessa (true faith), the feminine counterpart of Archimago, and morally the opposite of Gloriana (Elizabeth); she is meant to indicate Mary Queen of Scots. To understand Spenser's view of life, you must remember that the Saracen is deceived by her, as the Red Cross knight afterwards is.

22. *An Emperour* : the Pope.

30. *He pluckt a bough* : the bleeding bough is an old incident in poetry: see note, Canto vi, 15. Spenser probably got it from Tasso, *Ger. Lib.*, xiii, 41, but young students may be more familiar with it in Virgil's account of Polydorus, *Æneid* iii, 26.

32. *Limbo lake* : the abode of lost souls.

33. *Fradubio* : Brother Doubtful; he hesitated between Fraelissa and Duessa. *Boreas*: the north wind.

37. *Fraelissa* : Frailty.

38. *A dull blast* : scandal.

CANTO III

Canto iii takes up the adventures of Una. The beautiful story of the faithful lion is meant to offset the knight's hasty desertion of his lady; the true instinct of the animal world is proverbially more discerning of character than human reason. Truth is safe with Nature throughout the book, and Una is to be rescued from Sansloy by another savage race. When Sansloy kills Archimago, the tempter's career would seem to be over, but we shall meet Archimago again; evil is constant in the world, and cannot be crushed once for all.

1. *Lately through her brightness blynd* : Spenser may refer to his reception by the Queen, or possibly to his former love for Rosalind.

4. *And layd her stole aside* : Una's face for the first time is unveiled when the lion sees her; he is mastered by the full charm of Truth.

7. *But he, my Lyon* : the knight.

9. The lion is the emblem of princely honor. His protection of Una expresses the human rather than the allegorical side of her character. The lamb, on the other hand, belonged to the allegory.

30. Una, like the knight, falls a victim to hypocrisy. From here on Spenser makes her seem more a human character than the embodiment of Truth.

31. *As when the beaten marinere* : Notice how frequently Spenser draws his images from seafaring. *Tethys* : wife of Oceanus. *Orion* : a hunter loved by Diana and accidentally killed by her arrows. His hound is Sirius, the dog-star. *Nereus* : the god of the sea in its calmer aspects; father-in-law of Neptune.

32. *Neptune* : the supreme god of the sea.

35. Sansloy is evil, but not untrue; therefore he is stronger than false Archimago.

36. *Lethe lake* : the river of forgetfulness, over which pass the souls of the dead. *Furies* : spirits of vengeance.

40. *Her selfe so mockt to see* : Una is never again deceived by hypocrisy. Henceforth she detects her enemies at once.

42. In the death of the lion Spenser reveals something of Virgil's sense of the pathos of the animal world. The pathos is in the allegory also; Truth is ultimately victorious, at the price of faithful lives.

CANTO VI

This canto is remarkable for its pictures; the appeal throughout is to the eye. The two romantic pastorals, Una's adventure among the satyrs and the story of Satyrane, blend in tone, but, like the episodes in most of the cantos, they are meant to present a contrast. As in the story of the lion, the theme here is the safety of virtue and the practice of courtesy in the natural

world. But Una is safe among the wood-creatures because of her unusual beauty, here a quality of the soul; Satyrane's influence over them comes from that rare sympathy with nature, which men in all ages have explained as a supernatural inheritance. Fantastic as these two episodes may at first seem, the ability to feel their human truth is good evidence of the student's sensitiveness to poetry.

6. *Faunes, Satyres*: woodland creatures, half man, half goat, resembling Pan. *Sylvanus*: god of the woods.

9. *All stand astonished at her beauty bright*: The philosophical reason for the power of Una's beauty is founded on Plato's belief that "her (Wisdom's) loveliness would have been transporting if there had been a visible image of her." *Phaedrus*, 250.

9-13. Notice the pictures — the satyrs; their worship of Una; Silvanus.

15. *Bacchus*: the god of wine. *Cybeles franticke rites*: Cybele or Rhea, the Earth, wife of Cronus and mother of the gods, worshipped, like Bacchus, with woodland orgies. *Dryope*: Lotis, a nymph escaping from Priapus, was turned into the flower that bears her name. *Dryope*, a princess, plucked the flower, which began to bleed, and *Dryope* was straightway turned into a tree. *Pholoe*: a nymph beloved by Silvanus.

17. *Cyparisse*: Cyparissus. Sylvanus killed a hind belonging to him, and the youth, dying of grief, was turned into a cyprus.

18. *Hamadryades*: nymphs of the trees. *Naiades*: nymphs of the rivers, lakes, and fountains.

19. *Image of Idolatryes*: the reference is to the worship of images in the Roman church.

20-30. Read and compare with Satyrane's story, the family legend of Donatello, *The Marble Faun*, ch. xxvi.

28. *These womanish words*: "womanish" in a good sense; notice how full of tenderness they are.

30. One of the most famous pictures of Una.

CANTO VII

The overthrow and imprisonment of the knight is the turning-point of Book I. Prince Arthur here enters the story and undertakes the rescue. It should be remembered that although Pride captures the Red Cross knight, he is really defeated by the gradual enchantments of sin, of which the fountain of slothfulness is the last example. His overthrow by the Giant is, in the deeper meaning of the allegory, the beginning of his escape from sin; the illusion is broken, and he realizes his condition.

5. *Phoebe*: Diana. The fountain of slothfulness, like the bleeding bough, is old in poetry: Spenser imitates it from Tasso, *Ger. Lib.*, xiv, 74.

7. *Th'Elfe, therewith astowned*: the knight, caught without

his armor, for the first time appears in an ignoble situation. It is the omen of his complete downfall, and at this point he begins to see that he has been led astray.

8. *An hideous Geaunt* : Orgoglio, Pride.

10. *Upon a snaggy Oke* : In Orgoglio is shown the brutality of pride, indicated by his unknightly weapon.

12. *Pouldred all as thin as flowre* : Spenser makes the fall of the erring champion not only unknightly, but also somewhat ridiculous.

13. It is easy to see why gunpowder and cannon, when first introduced, supplied the Renaissance imagination with epic images.

14. Duessa's desertion of the knight shows him how he has been deceived; it is the end of her power over him.

16. *A monstrous beast* : See *Rev.* 17 : 3.

17. *That renowned snake* : the Hydra, a seven-headed serpent that infested the marshes of Lerna. To kill it was the second of the twelve labors of Hercules (Alcides).

29. *A goodly knight* : Prince Arthur, the hero of the poem. See what Spenser says of him in the letter to Raleigh.

30. *Hesperus* : the evening star.

31. *For all the crest a Dragon* : The dragon on the helmet was Arthur's family symbol. His father was called Uther Pen-dragon (head-dragon).

32. *Selinis* : a mountain in Sicily.

33. The shield, like the other magic armor of Arthur, is an outward sign of the power of virtue, expressing his character; it is the Renaissance way of showing that Heaven fights on Arthur's side, just as the gods sided with mortals in the *Æneid* or in Homer.

34. *Phoebus* : the sun. *Cynthia* : the moon.

36. *Merlin* : the enchanter in the Arthurian legend.

37. Compare Chaucer's famous description of the Knight and the Squire, *Canterbury Tales*, Prol., 43-101.

41. The speed of the dialogue in this stanza is remarkable; Spenser is rarely so concise. Notice the effect as a climax after the more languid argument of the preceding stanzas.

43. *Phison, Euphrates, Gehon* : rivers of Eden.

44. *Tartary* : Tartarus, the prison of the Titans, afterwards the abode of the wicked in Hades.

46. *Gloriane* : Elizabeth. *Cleopolis* : London.

68. *The forlorne reliques* : The knight's armor is not captured by the giant, because of the demands of the allegory: it is the heavenly armor (see the letter to Sir Walter Raleigh), and cannot be used by powers of evil.

CANTO VIII

The two episodes in this canto, the defeat of the Giant and the finding of the Red Cross knight, are really one: they are closely united in the allegorical meaning of the poem, and

spiritually the second is more important. The battle with the Giant should be compared with that of the Red Cross knight and the dragon, in the eleventh book; in allegorical intention they are quite distinct, and they appeal to different sources of interest. Arthur, the image of the special grace of Heaven, is invincible: he is, as it were, the touchstone of truth, and the Giant, on coming in contact with him, is doomed to destruction. In the later battle, however, there is a true struggle.

1. *Heavenly grace*: Arthur. *Stedfast truth*: Una.

3. *An horne of bugle small*: The Prince's bugle, with its wonderful properties, is lineally derived through the romantic epics from Roland's horn. In this passage it recalls also the trumpets blown before Jericho, *Joshua* 6: 13-20.

7-20. This short encounter has for its climax the unveiling of Arthur's shield, the magical power of which, however, is as much the sign of victory as the cause of it. Though Arthur gives way before the brute strength of the Giant, he is not beaten. In this respect the contest is very different from the Red Cross knight's battle with the dragon; the knight wins only through fortunate help from Heaven. Notice how successfully Spenser gives the impression of the Giant's enormous bulk; he has much of Milton's gift for rendering size.

14. *Her golden cup*: See *Rev.* 17: 4.

24. *Like an emptie blader was*: This vanishing of the giant seems almost a contradiction of the sense of the gross materialism of Pride, which Spenser gave us in the Giant's bulk, in the dead weight of his shorn arm, and in the ponderous fall of his body. This is an example of Spenser's apparently inconsistent way of embodying his allegory in the story (see Introduction, p. xv). There is no inconsistency in the allegory; Pride is grossly material, but it can be pricked like a bubble.

27. *And you*: the squire. The remainder of the stanza Una addresses to Arthur and the squire both; in the next stanza she addresses Arthur alone.

29. *A solemne silence over all*: Spenser has his usual sharp contrast to the battle episode in the unnatural quiet of the castle and in the indifference of Ignaro.

30. *An old old man*: Ignorance, the proper servant of Pride. Notice the musical effect, like a refrain, of his one speech, "He could not tell."

38-44. Spenser is, of course, most interested here in the allegory of the soul, but the condition of the imprisoned knight appeals strongly on its human side. It is easy to imagine his humiliation when he is found in this state by Una, whom he had misjudged. The contrast is emphasized and the steadfastness of her love reasserted in her first words to him.

44. A good example of Spenser's moralizing. Remember that his experience of life made him sensitive to the vital truth in what may seem to us platitude.

CANTO IX

The episode of Despayre in this canto is one of the most imaginative passages in the whole poem. It is the logical incident to follow the knight's release: the consciousness of weakness, so lately impressed upon him, and the difficulty of the quest he now resumes, naturally produce a frame of mind in which the counsel of suicide is not unwelcome. It is Una who saves him from himself; in a sense she shares the quest, and so becomes the most modern of Spenser's heroines, the true helpmeet of her lover, with no loss of womanly delicacy.

19. *A booke, wherein his Saveours testament*: It should be remembered that to the laity the Bible was still a rare book; Spenser is conscious of the value of the knight's gift.

22. *About his neck an hempen rope*: The unknightly array of the fugitive reminds the Red Cross knight of his recent disgrace, and encourages the mood of despair.

25. *Eft looking back*: Try to visualize the whole scene; much of the expression is dramatic, conveyed through action, as in this attitude of fear.

28. *From whom returning sad and comfortlesse*: Notice how Despayre always takes his victims when they are in a helpless mood.

31. *His subtile tong like dropping honny meal'th*: Only a supreme poet would dare to describe in such terms a speech that he was about to reproduce. But it is generally agreed that the eloquence he puts into the mouth of Despayre more than justifies his description of it.

33. *Low in a hollow cave*: See note, Canto i, 11. *The ghastly Owle, shrieking*: The element of sound is characteristic of the whole picture. See note, Canto i, 34.

38-40. Hardly anything in English poetry is more famous than the persuasive music of these stanzas, which reaches a climax in the familiar close of st. 40. Read aloud all the speeches of Despayre, and try to feel the lulling effect, that breaks down the knight's courage as much by the music as by the argument. What astonishes most, next to the music, is the tone of nobility that Despayre assumes, notably in st. 40. His confidence in his cause is startling, after such a picture of him as we get in st. 35-37.

43-47. The breadth of Spenser's sympathy and the power of his imagination are singularly illustrated in this argument against his own beliefs; of course his idea of suicide is entirely Una's, but he is too true to life to minimize the appeal of Despayre.

49. *The damned ghosts*: It is surprising at first that the sight of spirits in torment should persuade to suicide a soul that expects to join them, but it is probably entirely true to life.

53. In such a passage as this it is not the allegorical side of Una's character that is most prominent; like Shakspeare's

heroines, she seems altogether noble womanhood, superior to her lover, but for that reason humanly nearer to him.

54. *Till he should die his last*: Despayre, like Archimago, is constant in life, never to be crushed utterly.

CANTO XI

The knight's three-days battle with the Dragon illustrates the virtue of perseverance in the Christian life. Each loss that the Dragon suffers is irreparable; the knight's wounds, however, are cured, and his strength increased, by the well of life and the tree of life. As in the case of Arthur's shield, this magical assistance represents the power of righteousness within the knight's soul, rather than unexpected help from without. Try to visualize all the images, and to realize the size of the Dragon; Spenser is picturing a real struggle, not a one-sided victory.

4. *Himselfe like a great hill*: One of the best examples of Spenser's ability to portray sheer size. See note, Canto viii, 7, and cf. Milton's first picture of Satan, *Par. Lost*, i, 192-209.

5. *Thou sacred Muse*: Clio, Muse of History. *His aged bryde*: Mnemosyne, Memory.

6. *The God of warre*: Mars.

8. Notice how the Dragon's size is indicated in this stanza.

9. *So shaked he, that horror was to heare*: Once more Spenser fills his scene with a characteristic sound.

18. The beautiful image of the flight of the Dragon brings out the insignificance of the knight at the beginning of the battle. He greatens as the fight goes on.

19. *As hagdard hauke*: a wild hawk.

21. All the images of the Dragon are large, but this stanza is one of the most magnificent.

28. *Death better were*: The patient, sorrowful mood of the knight is in striking contrast with Prince Arthur's spirit in battle.

29. *The well of life*: See *Rev.* 22 : 1. Una's home is in the land of Eden.

30. *Silo*: Siloam. See *St. John* 9 : 7. *Jordan*: See 2 *Kings* 5 : 14. *Bath, Spau*: famous English and German watering places. *Cephise*: a river in Attica. *Hebrus*: a river in Thrace.

33. *That Titan rose*: the sun. *Safety*: three syllables.

34. *Eyas hauke*: a young hawk. Notice the play upon words in the last line of the stanza — an affectation common to all Elizabethan literature.

36. The last line is remarkable for massive effect. Read it aloud and notice the great shocks of sound.

41. *Cerberus*: the three-headed watchdog of the infernal regions.

46. *A goodly tree*: the tree of life. See *Rev.* 22 : 2.

51. A beautiful picture of the dawn. The simple line at

the end enables Spenser to call up a true English landscape, in spite of his classical images.

54. *So downe he fell*: Notice the remarkable repetition. The situation here recalls the great phrases in the Song of Deborah, *Judges 5 : 27*.

CANTO XII

The first part of the canto gives a remarkably crowded picture of the rejoicings over the Dragon's death. In a few stanzas the whole population is portrayed, from the court to the "raskall many." Spenser is usually so allegorical in his method, that this realistic passage is all the more noteworthy. In the betrothal scene the attention, as in a painting, is focused upon Una's face, which seems to illuminate the whole picture by its radiance — the glory of triumphant Truth.

5-8. Contrast these pictures of peace with the battle scene just over. Notice also the literary quality of the triumphal procession, as opposed to the realistic, even humorous, study of character in 10 and 11. Spenser, like Shakspeare and Milton, understands the people, but at heart is an aristocrat.

18. *Of ease or rest I may not yet devise*: Life being a continual warfare, the knight cannot rest, any more than Archimago or Duessa can be slain.

22. *For she had layd her mournefull stole aside*: The knight sees the unveiled face of Truth for the first time. The "painting" quality of the picture, characteristic of Spenser, can be seen by comparing it with Milton's thoroughly human, though idealized, pictures of Eve, *Par. Lost*, iv, 288-324, and ix, 453-463.

BOOK II

CANTO I

The story of Mordant and Amavia introduces us to the subject of the second book, as the meeting of Archimago introduced us to the subject of the first book. In both episodes the quest is announced; here we see that Guyon is to conquer Acrasia (Intemperance), and that the Palmer is his attendant virtue (Self-restraint), as Una had been of the Red Cross knight. But the interest of this book is in the quest, and in the characters encountered along the way, as here in the pathetic story of Amavia; Guyon and the Palmer attract far less attention to themselves than did Una and her knight. On the other hand, this book excels the first in the wonderful descriptions of the temptations through which Guyon passes. Nowhere is the life of the senses set forth with such power.

6. *Well could he tourney*: Guyon, unlike the Red Cross knight, has had much previous experience in warfare; Temperance implies long-practiced restraint. *Sir Huon*: in the

old romance, Sir Huon of Bordeaux, successor to Oberon, King of Fairy-land.

36. Amavia, killing herself for grief, is as much an example of intemperance as Mordant is.

46. The pitiful picture has its full force only when we remember how essential to chivalry was the idea of rescue. Guyon is helpless to cure this evil, though his mission is to conquer Acrasia.

51. *Acrasia*: Intemperance, Guyon's foe, as the Dragon was the foe of the Red Cross knight. Her dwelling, the Bower of Bliss on the wandering isle, and her detention of a knight from his true work, are derived from Tasso and Ariosto, but are found in some form in all the epics. Cf. Odysseus' stay with Calypso on the island of Ogygia; Achilles sulking in his tent for love of Briseis; the Dido episode in the *Æneid*.

52. *Palmer's weed*: a black cloak and a staff of palm wood. The Palmer was originally a pilgrim to the Holy Land, but came to be simply a religious beggar.

55. *Bacchus with the Nymph*: wine and water, every stream being supposed to have its nymph.

58. The Palmer's characteristic philosophy. Much more than Una, he is a direct teacher.

CANTO II

The washing of the babe's hands completes the story of the first canto. Guyon is fated to see many victims of intemperance whom he cannot rescue; as in this episode of Amavia, they have put themselves beyond his help. The picture of life that the book presents is therefore sadder than in the story of Una, and the scene is darker throughout, in spite of the panoramas of false beauty which the quest traverses.

1. *Tragedie*: unhappy incident. In mediæval literature the word has usually no dramatic sense. *The little babe*: The babe is an important actor in the tragedy, accenting the pathos through his helplessness and his infant unconsciousness of sorrow. These minor parts of the picture are often what makes the poet great as a true painter of life.

7. *Dan Faunus*: Dan, a general form of address in mediæval literature, from the Latin *dominus*. Faunus was a minor divinity of the woods. Notice how the episode of the nymph, at first such an apparent contrast to Amavia's story, really belongs with it as an illustration of the heavenly protection of temperance.

CANTO VI

The incident of the Idle Lake is the first of the temptations of pleasure, the first of the scenes of beauty that make this book remarkable. Cymochles and Guyon illustrate the two ways of meeting the temptation of idleness, though Guyon is

entirely sensible of the charm of Mirth. The canto appeals to the eye, through its pictures, but the music of the verse is quite as important.

1. The stanza announces the subject of the rest of the book — temptation through “joyous pleasure.” *But grieve and wrath*: the forms of intemperance that Guyon has hitherto met with.

2. *Cymochles*: wrath of the sea, as *Pyrochles* represents wrath of fire. *Atin*: the spirit of strife.

3. *A Lady fresh and jayre*: This whole episode of Mirth is particularly fine. Notice how vividly the manners of *Cymochles* and of *Guyon* are portrayed, showing their characters in their behavior towards Mirth. The character of Mirth is brought out, not only by what she does and says, but also by the accompanying pictures, of the boat, the lake, the floating island — all remarkable for lightness and instability. *Pope Jone*: a legendary female Pope, who lived a life of pleasure, and was deposed in disgrace.

4. *Atin by no way*: Neither *Atin* nor the *Palmer* is admitted to the boat; Strife and Self-restraint are no subjects for idleness.

9. *Phaedria*: the glittering one.

11. *An Island waste and voyd*: that is, morally; to all appearances the island is most luxuriant.

12-13. Note the wonderful smoothness of these stanzas, and in 13, the structure — tree, branch, bird song, each an echo from the preceding line: these causes of pleasure are summed up in line five, and the effect upon the tempted spirit is expressed by a similar linking of the last four lines.

15-18. One of *Spenser's* wonderful songs, imitated from *Tasso, Ger. Lib.*, xiv, 62, but the music is all his own. Notice how slow the song is; though the stanza is the same as in the narrative portions, the effect is more languid and delaying. Notice also how slight the intellectual content of the song is — merely an amplifying (and morally a perversion) of “Consider the lilies of the field.” The song appeals through the musical quality of its language; it would be hard to find anything in this kind of poetry more splendid than st. 16.

18. *The slouthfull wave*: the Idle Lake itself, sluggish and torpid, is not beautiful; the line gives the necessary disillusion after *Phaedria's* song.

19. *But the black Palmer*: See note 4.

21. Notice *Guyon's* courtesy and self-possession.

23. *Therewith she laught*: note the dramatic rendering of her character, after her apparently serious words.

CANTO VII

The descent into the lower world is a convention of epic poetry, and is represented in the *Faerie Queene* by this canto. Perhaps the subject itself is stimulating to the imagination;

certainly nothing could be more spirited than these scenes. The canto is divided into five parts—the introduction, in which Guyon meets Mammon; the house of Richesse; the coin-ing-place of riches; the court of Ambition; the garden of Prosperpine. Each division is marked by a speech of Mammon, tempting Guyon, and the knight's answer.

2. *So Guyon, having lost his trustie guyde*: Like the Red Cross knight after parting from Una, he meets temptations that, if they do not overcome him, at least exhaust his power of resistance, so that he is at the mercy of Pyrochles and Cymochles.

3. The picture of Mammon follows the conventional description in mediæval literature and in the Moralities.

5. *Mulciber*: Vulcan. His element is fire.

6. Mammon's attempt to hide the gold shows the miser's instinct, but in the rest of the canto he is much more than a miser; he stands for material power in general.

10. *For crownes and kingdomes*: Somewhat in the spiritual sense, but the next two lines remind us that Spenser holds to the feudal idea of knighthood, in which trade is despised.

15. *Through foule intemperaunce*: The climax of the argument. Guyon's directly didactic manner weakens this passage, making it the least effective in the canto.

17. *Of his great Grandmother*: the earth, mother of all.

18. *Leave have thou to refuse*: Guyon's error is here; if the Palmer had been with him, he would not have risked further conversation with Mammon. He sins in exposing himself to temptation.

20. The beginning of the adventure in the lower world. From here on the images are almost Dantesque in clearness and impressiveness.

21. *Plutoes griesly rayne*: Hades.

22. Notice the vivid pictures, especially Jealousy and Fear.

23. *Celeno*: a harpy. Cf. Virgil, *Æneid* iii, 245.

26. *An ugly feend*: This tremendous figure represents the moral danger that Guyon is in throughout his severe temptation.

28. *Arachne*: the spider.

34. *Culver*: pigeon or dove.

35. *Into another rowme*: Mammon here shows Guyon the very source of wealth. The deformity of the attendant fiends is meant to indicate the essential baseness of riches.

40. *A sturdie villain*: Disdain, like the fiends (st. 35), serves to indicate in advance the true nature of the Ambition which he guards. He is the allegorical expression of ambition; the dramatic expression is in st. 47.

44. *A woman, gorgeous gay*: Philotime, Ambition.

45. *Till she did fall*: The gods thrust her from Heaven because she was ignoble ambition; the true love of honor would be one of the motives to ideal living.

47. Notice how crowded and complete the picture is.

51. *Into a garden*: the garden of Proserpine, a frequent subject with poets. See Swinburne's poem by that title.

52. *Heben*: ebony. *Hellebore*: a medicinal herb extensively used by the ancients. *Coloquintida*: the bitter gourd. *Tetra*: probably the Deadly Nightshade. *Samnitis*: perhaps the savin, a small tree of the pine family. *Cicuta*: hemlock.

54. The eleventh labor of Hercules was to take the golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides, where they were guarded by the daughters of Hesperis and Atlas. *Th'Eubæan young man*: Hippomenes, who, racing with Atalanta, threw in her path, one by one, the three golden apples that Aphrodite had given him. She stopped to pick them up, and lost the race.

55. *Acontius*: He won his love, Cydippe, by the gift of an apple from the garden of Venus: *That famous apple*: See the familiar story of the judgment of Paris. The student should read *Ænone*, Tennyson's version of it.

56. *Cocytus*: a river in Hades formed by the tears of the damned.

59. *Tantalus*: the father of Niobe. He served his own son, Pelops, for food at a banquet of the gods. For this he was punished as Spenser describes.

62. It is somewhat hard to see why Pilate's crime is classed under intemperance. Spenser probably thought that he was unjust through ambition.

CANTO VIII

The beautiful incident of the guardian angel stands in grateful relief between the adventure in Mammon's cave and the attack of Pyrochles and Cymochles. These impersonations of wrath determine to spoil Guyon's body of his arms, in defiance of knightly precedent; they represent wrath that has become unrestrained desire for revenge. In the third part of the canto Arthur appears, and killing the two brothers, rescues Guyon.

1-2. These stanzas are often quoted. They express the wonderful sweetness of Spenser's religious nature, and the second stanza shows where Milton got his bright celestial imagery.

3. *That wanton mayd*: See note, vi, 4.

5. *Like painted Jayes*: The angels' wings are colored, not white. For this conception of angelic beauty, the student should look up colored reproductions of Italian Renaissance masters in any good handbook of art.

6. *Idæan hill*: Mt. Ida, where Paris awarded the apple to Aphrodite. *Graces three*: Euphrosyne, Aglaia, and Thalia. *The Goddess*: Aphrodite.

8. The belief in the guardian angel takes many beautiful forms in the literature of this time. Cf. the good angel in the religious plays and in Marlowe's *Faust*; the "better angel" of Shakspeare's sonnet (cxliv); Hamlet's "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"

9. *His slow eyes*: The Palmer is characteristically deliberate.

10. *Acrates* : Anger, Intemperance.

13. The Palmer is not alone the defender of Guyon; he is here the counselor of the wrathful knights against themselves, urging them to temperance.

17. *An armed knight* : Arthur.

20. *Which Merlin made* : The enchanted sword is one of the "properties" of romance. The other name of Morddure is Excalibur. *Medaewart* : meadow-plant.

24. Arthur's courtesy is a lesson in temperance, self-restraint.

30. The treacherous attack of Pyrochles is the climax of his career of intemperance. *Termagaunt* : a legendary idol of the Saracens.

33. *Mahoune* : Mahomet.

35. *So both attonce* : The artistic effect is to make the fight more uncertain, therefore more interesting, and to enlist the sympathy of the reader on Arthur's side.

CANTO XII

The Bower of Bliss is another of the epic conventions (see note, Bk. ii, i, 51). The poet here pictures the most powerful temptation of the knight of Temperance. We should remember that Spenser is a Platonist, and believes that Beauty is the natural quest of the soul; Guyon would therefore be easily deceived by this paradise of false beauty, were he not constantly cautioned by the Palmer.

43. *Those unruly beasts* : The Bower of Bliss was guarded by wild beasts, which the Palmer tamed with his staff.

44. *Jason and Medæa* : Jason sailed in the Argo, with fifty Grecian heroes, to capture the Golden Fleece from Æetes, king of Colchis. He succeeded, with the help of the king's daughter, Medea, whom he married. When the king pursued them over the sea, Medea slew her brother, Absyrtus, and dropped the fragments of his body in the path of her father's ship. Æetes stopped to pick them up, and the fugitives escaped. Jason afterwards fell in love with Creusa, and the jealous Medea sent her a magic robe, which consumed her with fire.

46. *A comely personage* : not the true genius, Conscience, but the genius of intemperate pleasures.

50. The luxurious landscape is the first expression of intemperance. *Flora* : goddess of flowers.

52. *Rhodope* : a mountain in Thrace, where Dionysus was worshiped. *Tempe* : a valley in Thessaly. *Parnasse* : the home of Apollo and the Muses.

55. *A comely dame* : Drunkenness.

70. The music of Spenser's Bower of Bliss is perhaps its most remarkable characteristic. In this and the following stanza is gathered up all the music of the landscape, to be uttered again in the human song. The last line of 70 gives the theme of 71; notice how the images are linked, so as to give the effect of unbroken harmony.

74-75. This famous theme, common to all literature, here has its first notable expression in English poetry. It is practically a translation from Tasso (*Ger. Lib.*, xvi, 14). A comparison with Herrick's more often quoted "Gather ye rosebuds" will show Spenser's far greater tenderness and human sympathy; he emphasizes the passing of youth, the decay of beauty, rather than the hard counsel to eat, drink, and be merry.

75. *With equal crime*: the most extraordinary example of Spenser's sacrifice of meaning for the sake of rhyme (see Introduction, p. xviii). There cannot be any sense of crime in the song, or its message would be contradicted. The original line in Tasso is quite unambiguous:

— amiamo or quando
Esser si puote riamato amando.

82. *Verdant*: the youthful one; the type of nature that is rescued by Guyon's victory over Intemperance.

BOOK III

CANTO II

The history of Britomart and Arthegall is the great love-story of the Faerie Queene. Arthur is indeed in love with Gloriana, but his love adventures form no part of the poem. All the fortunes of Britomart, on the other hand, are involved in some way with her love for the knight of Justice. Britomart is derived through the epics, from the original legend of Amazons, women warriors; none of the earlier fighting maidens, however, with the possible exception of Camilla, in the *Æneid*, can compare with her in nobility and charm of character.

18. *Ryence*: King of Wales and Ireland, an enemy of Arthur's in Malory's version of the legend.

20. *The Towre*: Spenser is supposed to derive this incident from a mediæval legend, which evidently combined the fame of the Pharos at Alexandria with the astronomer Ptolemy's repute as a magician.

25. *Achilles armes, which Arthegall did win*: Arthegall becomes more and more the human hero of the poem, as it progresses, and it is evidently Spenser's intention to give him something of the Homeric hero's splendor. In Arthegall Spenser idealizes his friend, Lord Grey.

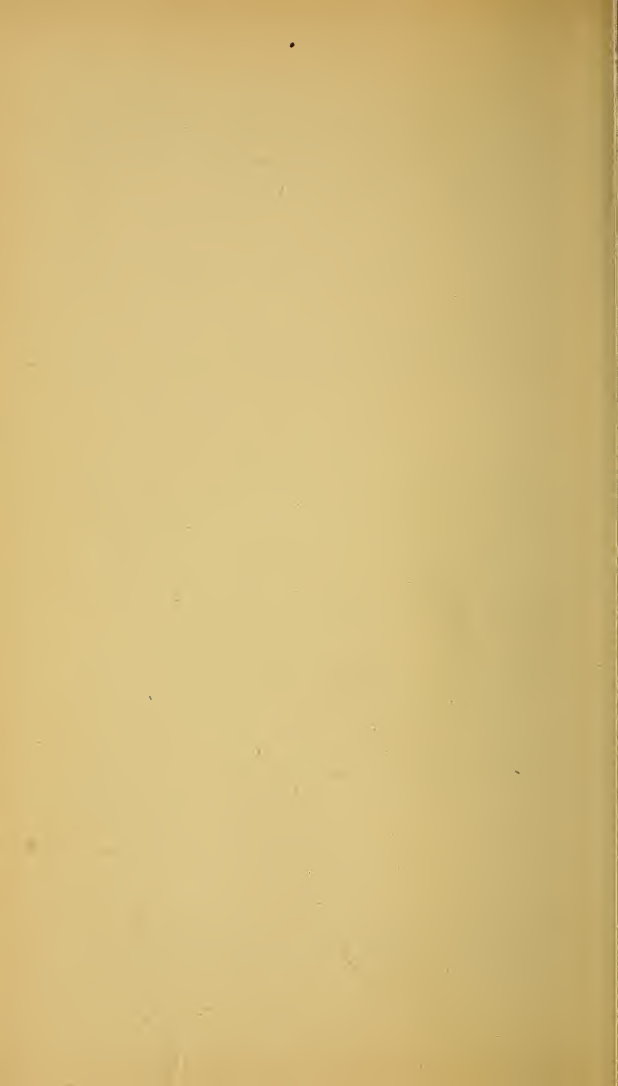
26. *The false archer*: Cupid.

BOOK IV

CANTO VI

19. This famous passage illustrates the power of Beauty — a doctrine that Spenser gets from Plato. Arthegall is conquered by the sight of Britomart's face. Cf. *Par. Lost*, ix 453-463.

20. *Pactolus* : Midas, an avaricious king, obtained from Bacchus his wish that everything he touched might be turned into gold. When this power became a curse, Bacchus told him to bathe in the Pactolus. The curse was removed, but the sands of the river turned into gold.



A LETTER OF THE AUTHORS,

EXPOUNDING HIS WHOLE INTENTION IN THE COURSE OF THIS
WORKE: WHICH, FOR THAT IT GIVETH GREAT LIGHT TO
THE READER, FOR THE BETTER UNDERSTANDING IS
HEREUNTO ANNEXED.

To the Right Noble and Valorous

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, KNIGHT,

LORD WARDEIN OF THE STANNERYES,¹ AND HER MAESTIES
LIEFETENAUNT OF THE COUNTY OF CORNEWAYLL.

SIR, knowing how doubtfully all Allegories may be construed, and this booke of mine, which I have entituled the Faery Queene, being a continued Allegory, or darke conceit, I haue thought good, as well for avoyding of gealous opinions and misconstructions, as also for your better light in reading thereof, (being so by you commanded,) to discover unto you the general intention and meaning, which in the whole course thereof I have fashioned, without expressing of any particular purposes, or by² accidents, therein occasioned. The generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline: Which for that I conceived shoulde be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historicall fiction, the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter then for profite of the ensample, I chose the historye of King Arthure, as most fitte for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many mens former workes, and also furthest from the daunger of envy, and suspition of present time. In which I have followed all the antique Poets historicall; first Homere, who in the Persons of Agamemnon and Ulysses hath ensampled a good governour and a vertuous man, the one in his Ilias, the other in

¹ Stannaries; tin-mines.

² Incidental, as in "by-product."

his *Odysseis*: then Virgil, whose like intention was to doe in the person of *Æneas*: after him Ariosto comprised them both in his *Orlando*: and lately Tasso dissevered them againe, and formed both parts in two persons, namely that part which they in Philosophy call *Ethice*, or vertues of a private man, coloured in his *Rinaldo*; the other named *Politice* in his *Godfredo*. By ensample of which excellent Poets, I labour to pourtraict¹ in *Arthure*, before he was king, the image of a brave knight, perfected in the twelve private morall vertues, as Aristotle hath devised; the which is the purpose of these first twelve bookes: which if I finde to be well accepted, I may be perhaps encouraged to frame the other part of polliticke vertues in his person, after that hee came to be king.

To some, I know, this Methode will seeme displeasaunt, which had rather have good discipline delivered plainly in way of precepts, or sermoned at large, as they use, then thus clowdily enwrapped in Allegoricall devises. But such, me seeme,² should be satisfide with the use of these dayes, seeing all things accounted by their shewes,³ and nothing esteemed of, that is not delightfull and pleasing to commune sence. For this cause is *Xenophon* preferred before *Plato*, for that the one, in the exquisite depth of his judgement, formed a Commune welth, such as it should be; but the other in the person of *Cyrus*, and the *Persians*, fashioned a government, such as might best be: So much more profitable and gracious is doctrine by ensample, then by rule. So haue I laboured to doe in the person of *Arthure*: whome I conceive, after his long education by *Timon*, to whom he was by *Merlin* delivered to be brought up, so soone as he was borne of the Lady *Igrayne*, to have seene in a dream or vision the Faery Queen, with whose excellent beauty ravished, he awaking resolved to seeke her out; and so being by *Merlin* armed, and by *Timon* thoroughly instructed, he went to seeke her forth in Faerye land. In that Faery Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceive the most excellent and glorious person of our soveraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery land. And yet, in some places els, I doe otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royall Queene or Empresse, the other of a most vertuous and beautifull Lady, this latter part in some places I doe expresse in

¹ Portray.² Me-seems; it seems to me.³ Appearance.

Belphebe, fashioning her name according to your owne excellent conceipt of Cynthia, (Phœbe and Cynthia being both names of Diana.) So in the person of Prince Arthure I sette forth magnificence in particular; which vertue, for that (according to Aristotle and the rest) it is the perfection of all the rest, and conteineth in it them all, therefore in the whole course I mention the deedes of Arthure applyable to that vertue, which I write of in that booke. But of the xii. other vertues, I make xii. other knights the patrones, for the more variety of the history: Of which these three bookes containe three.

The first of the knight of the Redcrosse, in whome I expresse Holynes: The seconde of Sir Guyon, in whome I sette forth Temperaunce: The third of Britomartis, a Lady Knight, in whome I picture Chastity. But, because the beginning of the whole worke seemeth abrupte, and as depending upon other antecedents, it needs that ye know the occasion of these three knights seuerall adventures. For the Methode of a Poet historical is not such, as of an Historiographer. For an Historiographer discourseth of affayres orderly as they were donne, accounting¹ as well the times as the actions; but a Poet thrusteth into the midst, even where it most concerneth him, and there recouring to the thinges forepaste, and divining of thinges to come, maketh a pleasing Analysis of all.

The beginning therefore of my history, if it were to be told by an Historiographer should be the twelfth booke, which is the last; where I devise that the Faery Queene kept her Annuall feaste xii. dayes; uppon which xii. severall dayes, the occasions of the xii. severall adventures hapned, which, being undertaken by xii. severall knights, are in these xii. books severally handled and discoursed. The first was this. In the beginning of the feast, there presented him selfe a tall clownishe younge man, who falling before the Queene of Faries desired a boone (as the manner then was) which during that feast she might not refuse; which was that hee might have the atchievement of any adventure, which during that feaste should happen: that being graunted, he rested him on the floore, unfitte through his rusticity for a better place. Soone after entred a faire Ladye in mourning weedes, riding on a white Asse, with a dwarfe behind her leading a warlike steed, that bore the Armes of a knight, and his speare in the dwarfes hand. Shee, falling

¹ Taking into consideration.

before the Queene of Faeries, complayned that her father and mother, an ancient King and Queene, had bene by an huge dragon many years shut up in a brasen Castle, who thence suffred them not to yssew; and therefore besought the Faery Queene to assygne her some one of her knights to take on him that exployt. Presently that clownish person, upstarting, desired that adventure: whereat the Queene much wondering, and the Lady much gainesaying, yet he earnestly importuned his desire. In the end the Lady told him, that unlesse that armour which she brought, would serve him (that is, the armour of a Christian man specified by Saint Paul, vi. Ephes.) that he could not succeed in that enterprise; which being forthwith put upon him, with dewe furnitures thereunto, he seemed the goodliest man in all that company, and was well liked of the Lady. And eftesoones¹ taking on him knighthood, and mounting on that straunge Courser, he went forth with her on that adventure: where beginneth the first booke, viz.

A gentle knight was pricking on the playne. &c.

The second day ther came in a Palmer, bearing an Infant with bloody hands, whose Parents he complained to have bene slayn by an Enchaunteresse called Acrasia; and therefore craved of the Faery Queene, to appoint him some knight to performe that adventure; which being assigned to Sir Guyon, he presently went forth with that same Palmer: which is the beginning of the second booke, and the whole subject thereof. The third day there came in a Groome, who complained before the Faery Queene, that a vile Enchanter, called Busirane, had in hand a most faire Lady, called Amoretta, whom he kept in most grievous torment, because she would not yield him the pleasure of her body. Whereupon Sir Scudamour, the lover of that Lady, presently² tooke on him that adventure. But being vnable to performe it by reason of the hard Enchauntments, after long sorrow, in the end met with Britomartis, who succoured him, and reskewed his loue.

But by occasion hereof many other adventures are intermedled; but rather as Accidents then intendments:³ As the love of Britomart, the overthrow of Marinell, the misery of Florimell, the vertuousnes of Belphebe, the lasciviousnes of Hellenora, and many the like.

¹ Soon afterwards.

² Immediately.

³ Intentions.

Thus much, Sir, I have briefly overronne to direct your understanding to the wel-head of the History; that from thence gathering the whole intention of the conceit, ye may as in a handfull gripe al the discourse, which otherwise may happily¹ seeme tedious and confused. So, humbly craving the continuance of your honorable favour towards me, and th' eternall establishment of your happines, I humbly take leave.

23. Ianuary 1589,

Yours most humbly affectionate,

ED. SPENSER.

¹ Haply; by chance.



GLOSSARY

Abye, pay for.
 Accloyes, obstructs.
 Acquit, released.
 Adaw, subdue.
 Aggrate, please.
 Aghast, terrified.
 Agrize, terrify.
 Aguize, dress, adorn.
 Albe, although.
 All, although.
 Als, so.
 Amate, check, daunt.
 Amenaunce, mien.
 Appall, weaken.
 Appeached, accused.
 Arayd, adorned.
 Aread, tell.
 Armory, arms.
 Arrett, impute.
 Assaid, tried.
 Assay, trial, affliction.
 Assynd, pointed out.
 Attonce, at once.
 Avale, availe, sink.
 Advise, perceive.
 Avizefull, watchful.
 Aware, wary.
 Ay, ever.
 Baite, feed.
 Bale, evil, woe.
 Baleful, woeful.
 Banket, banquet.
 Baser, lower.
 Bauldrick, belt.
 Bayes, bathes.
 Been, beene, are.
 Beguyld, turned aside.
 Beheast, command.
 Behight, ordained.
 Behott, promised.
 Belamoure, lover.

Beseene, comely.
 Bestedd, beset.
 Beteeme, grant.
 Bewray, betray.
 Bits, food.
 Bittur, small heron.
 Blame, hurt.
 Blaze, proclaim.
 Blend, blind.
 Blest, brandished.
 Blubbred, swollen from weeping.
 Booteth, it profits.
 Bootlesse, unavailing.
 Bord, accost.
 Bosses, knobs at the end of a bridle-bit.
 Boughtes, loops,
 Bourne, boundary.
 Bowrs, muscles.
 Boystrous, big.
 Brast, burst.
 Braught, brought.
 Bray, cry out.
 Breach, breaking, quarrel.
 Brond, brand.
 Buffe, blow.
 Burganet, helmet.
 Buxome, yielding, obedient.
 Byding, waiting.
 Bylive, quickly.
 Canon, curved round bit.
 Card, chart.
 Carke, care.
 Carle, churl.
 Carver, fit for carving.
 Cast, determined.
 Certes, truly, certainly.
 Chauffed, chafed, angry.
 Chear, expression of the face.
 Closely, secretly.

Compell, drive.
 Constraine, compel.
 Constraint, distress.
 Cott, small boat.
 Courd, covered.
 Couth, could.
 Crime, requital.
 Crudled, curdled.

Damnifyde, hurt.
 Darrayne, draw up in line of battle.

Dayes-man, umpire.
 Deadly, death-giving.
 Dearnly, sadly.
 Deaw, dew.
 Debate, contend.
 Defeasaunce, defeat.
 Delve, recess.
 Dempst, judged.
 Der-doing, dare-doing, bold.
 Deryved, diverted.
 Despight, aversion.
 Dight, arrange, put on, prepare.

Discoure, discover.
 Disdaine, that which is despicable.
 Dispiteous, pitiless.
 Displaide, spread out.
 Disseized, dispossessed.
 Distent, distended.
 Distraine, torment.
 Dites, prepares, raises.
 Ditt, ditty.

Diverse, capable of various forms.
 Doe, doen, do, make, compel.
 Drad, dreaded.
 Drent, drowned.
 Drere, grief.
 Dreriment, sorrow.
 Drift, aim, purpose.
 Drousy-hed, drowsiness.

Earne, yearn.
 Eath, easy.
 Edifyde, built.
 Effraide, frightened.
 Eke, also.
 Elfe, fairy.

Embard, confined.
 Embay, bathe.
 Embosse, stick.
 Embost, worn out.
 Emboyled, heated.
 Empassioned, made passionate.
 Empeach, hinder, hindrance.
 Enchace, portray.
 Enfouldred, mixed with lighting.

Engorged, congested.
 Enhaunst, raised.
 Enterprize, energy.
 Entirely, earnestly.
 Entize, entice.
 Entraile, entanglement.
 Ermelin, ermine.
 Expire, breathe out.

Fell, fierce.
 Fell, took up, entered upon.
 Felnesse, fierceness.
 Fen, marsh.
 Fervent, hot.
 Fitt, stroke, passion.
 Flitt, fleet.
 Flitting, unsubstantial.
 Foltring, faltering.
 Fond, found, foolish.
 Fone, foes.
 Fordonne, destroyed.
 Foreby, beside.
 Foretaught, taught the contrary of.

Forlore, forlorn, left.
 Formally, expressly.
 Forthy, therefore.
 Forrayed, ravaged.
 Fortilage, outwork.
 Forwasted, laid waste.
 Foynd, lunged.
 Fraught, freighted.
 Fray, frighten.
 Fro, from.

Geare, jeer.
 Gent, gentle.
 Gest, achievement.
 German, brother.
 Ghost, spirit.
 Giusts, jousts.

Glee, pleasure.
 Gobbets, mouthfuls.
 Gorge, throat.
 Graile, gravel.
 Grate, irritate, trouble.
 Griesy, sluggish.
 Gryde, pierce.
 Gryped, grasped.
 Guerdon, reward.
 Guize, habit.
 Gyeld, guild hall.
 Hacqueton, leather jacket.
 Hanging, suspended.
 Hard, heard.
 Hardiment, hardihood.
 Harrow and well away, alack
 and alas!
 Haubergh, coat of mail.
 Haught, high, haughty.
 Heasts, commands.
 Heben, ebony.
 Hefte, heaved.
 Hent, took.
 Hight, named, am called, is
 called.
 Hond, hand.
 Horrid, rough.
 Hot, was called.
 Hove, rise.
 Hurtlesse, harmless.
 Hurtling, rushing headlong.
 Importable, unbearable.
 Importune, importunate, un-
 seasonable.
 In, lodging.
 Incontinent, without delay.
 Ingowes, ingots.
 Invent, find out.
 Jolly, brave.
 Journall, daily.
 Keepe, heed.
 Keeping, guard.
 Kend, known.
 Kest, cast.
 Lad, led.
 Launched, lanced, pierced.

Learne, teach.
 Leman, lover.
 Let, hinder, hindrance.
 Liefe, love, darling.
 Lin, cease.
 List, it pleased.
 Loft, sky.
 Lompish, stupid.
 Lore, instruction, learning.
 Loth, unwilling.
 Louting, bowing.
 Lowre, threaten.
 Lust, please.
 Maidenhed, maidenhood.
 Make, mate.
 Mall, club.
 Mayne, force.
 Maynly, strongly.
 Mazer, drinking cup.
 Meed, recompense.
 Mell, mingle.
 Mew, confinement.
 Mind, call to mind.
 Mister, kind of.
 Mo, more.
 Moniment, stamp.
 Mote, may, must, might.
 Mought, might.
 Nathelesse, not the less.
 Nathemore, not the more.
 Nicer, too fastidious.
 N'ill, will not.
 Note, know not.
 N'ote, might not.
 N'ould, would not.
 Noyous, annoying.
 Only, mere.
 Or, either.
 Origane, wild marjoram.
 Ought, at all.
 Overcraw, triumph over.
 Owches, brooches.
 Paire, impair.
 Pall, mantle.
 Paramoure, lover.
 Parbreake, vomit.
 Pardale, panther.

- Passe, surpass.
 Passionate, express passion-ately.
 Peaze, blow.
 Peece, ship.
 Pennes, feathers.
 Pight, fixed, pitched.
 Pin, peg or bar.
 Pleasauns, delights.
 Plesh, pool.
 Portance, carriage.
 Poynant, keen.
 Poyse, weight.
 Praunce, strut.
 Preace, press, crowd.
 Prest, prepared.
 Priefe, proof, test.
 Prowest, bravest.
 Pryme, Springtime.
 Purfled, embroidered.
 Purveyaunce, supply.

 Quayd, quailed.
 Quited, answered, requited.
 Quyteth, answers.
 Quitt, liberated.

 Raine, rein.
 Ramping, springing.
 Rancor, malice.
 Rare, extraordinary.
 Raskall, common.
 Raught, reached.
 Ravin, plunder.
 Ray, soil.
 Rayle, flow.
 Read, advise, consider.
 Reave, take away, bereave of.
 Rebutte, recoil.
 Red, known.
 Redounding, overflowing.
 Reed, imagine.
 Reedes, considers.
 Relived, revived.
 Renfiest, reenforced.
 Repriefe, reproof.
 Reprive, set free.
 Requere, ask back, require.
 Revok't, called back.
 Riddes, despatches.
 Rife, exceedingly.

 Rive, split.
 Rode, roadstead.

 Sad, grave.
 Salvage, savage.
 Sansfoy, Faithless.
 Sansjoy, Joyless.
 Sansloy, Lawless.
 Saught, sought.
 Scored, engraved.
 Scowre, hurry.
 Scruzed, squeezed.
 Seare, burning.
 Seased, seized.
 Seely, innocent.
 Selfe-wild, self-willed.
 Sell, saddle.
 Semblants, phantoms.
 Semblaunt, appearance.
 Sent, scent.
 Sharphead, sharp-headed.
 Shendst, shamest.
 Shere, bright.
 Sheres, cleaves.
 Shrightes, shrieks.
 Shrowd, take shelter.
 Silly, innocent.
 Sinke, deposit,
 Sith, since.
 Sits, befits.
 Skill, understanding.
 Slights, devices.
 Slombred, sleeping.
 Slouthfull, slothful.
 Snubbes, snags.
 Sooth, truth.
 Sovenance, remembrance.
 Sownd, wield.
 Spersed, dispersed.
 Spies, glances.
 Sprent, sprinkled.
 Stadle, staff.
 Starke, stiff.
 Sted, place.
 Sterne, tail.
 Stire, move.
 Stole, cloak.
 Stomachous, angry.
 Stomacke, anger.
 Stound, stownd, stunned,
 amazement.

Stound, moment.
 Stowre, peril, trouble, conflict.
 Styel, soar.
 Suspect, suspicion.
 Swarved, swerved.
 Swelt, swelled.
 Swinck, toil.
 Swinged, singed.
 Swowne, swoon.

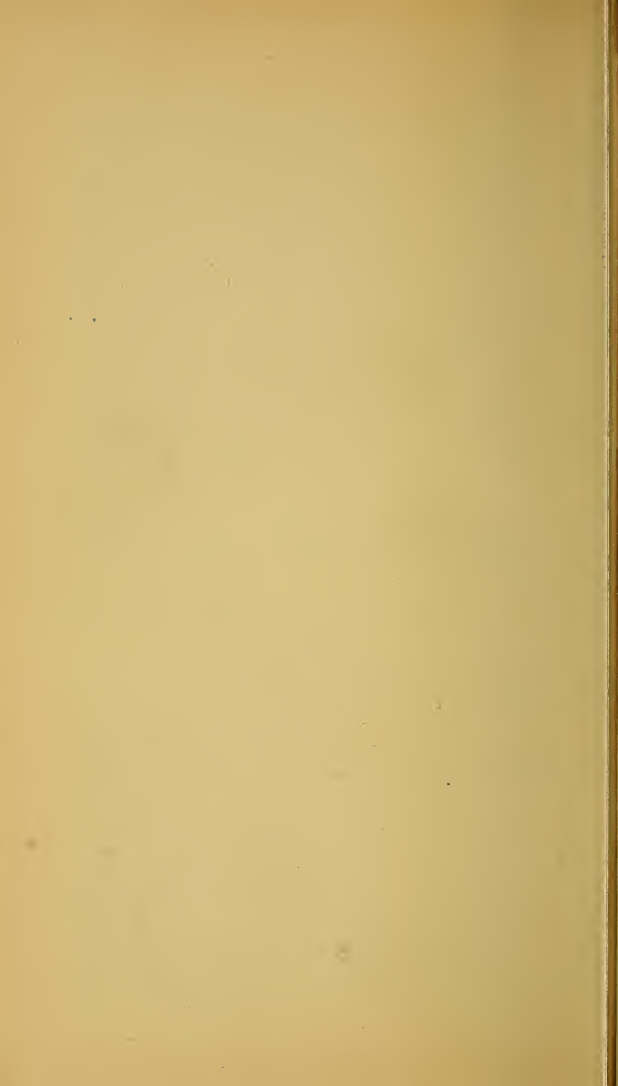
Tene, sorrow.
 Thewed, mannered.
 Tho, then.
 Thorough, through.
 Tind, lighted, kindled.
 Tort, wrong.
 Transmew, transmute.
 Treen, of trees.
 Trenchand, trenchant, cutting.
 Troncheon, staff.
 Trusse, seize.
 Tway, twain.
 Tyre, attire.

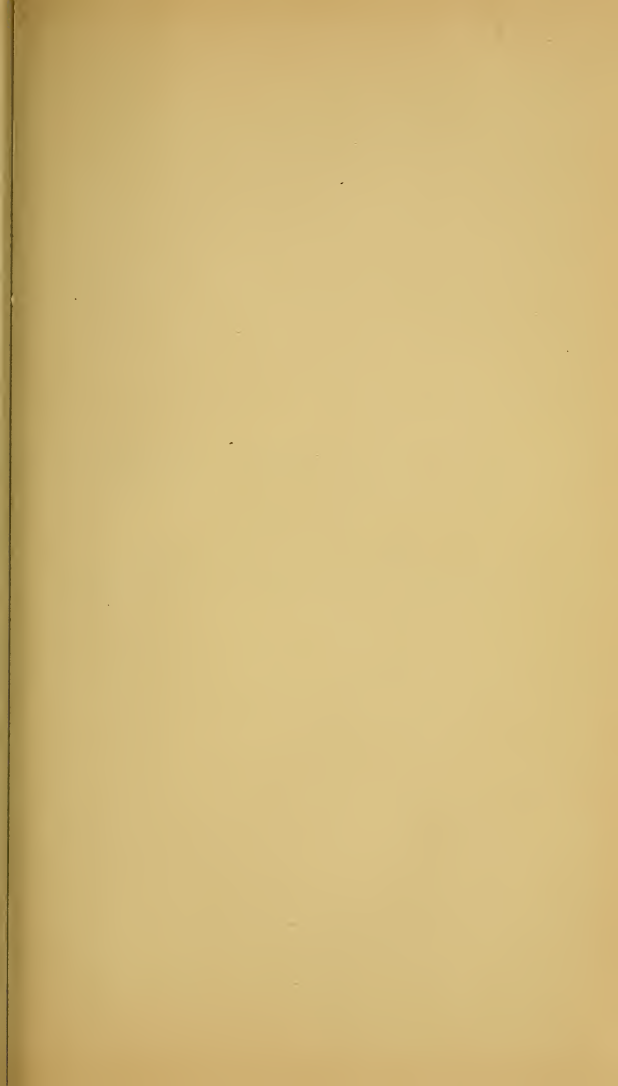
Uncouth, unaccustomed.
 Undight, took off.
 Uneath, with difficulty, almost.
 Untill, unto.
 Untoward, uncouth.
 Unweeting, not knowing, ignorant.

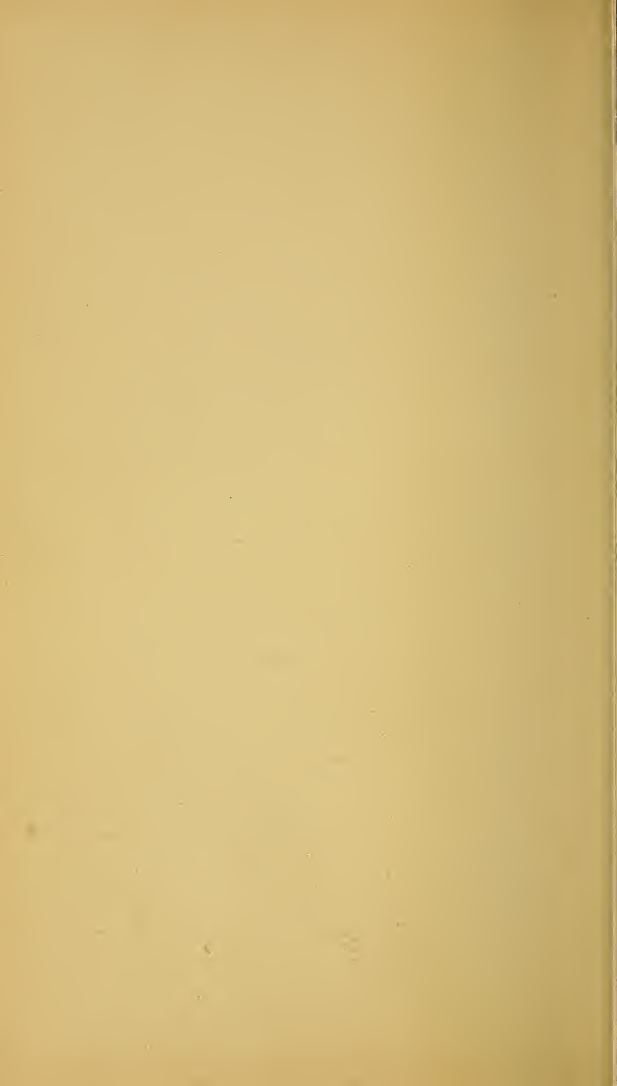
Vaut, vault.
 Ventayle, front of the helmet.
 Void, useless.
 Vylde, vile.

Wan, won.
 Ware, wary.

Waste, be worn away.
 Wastnes, wilderness.
 Weedee, garments, herbs.
 Weening, thinking.
 Weet, know.
 Wefte, was wafted.
 Weld, wield.
 Welke, fade.
 Wend, go.
 Wexed, grew.
 Whott, hot.
 Whyleare, a while ago.
 Whylome, formerly.
 Wight, person.
 Will, passion.
 Wimpled, folded into plaits.
 Wise, manner.
 Wist, knew.
 Withstood, prevented.
 Wonne, dwell, dwelling.
 Wont, accustomed.
 Wood, crazed.
 Wot, wote, know.
 Woxe, grew.
 Wracke, destruction.
 Wreakes, revenges.
 Wrethed, twisted.
 Wyde, remote, aside.
 Yblent, blinded.
 Ydrad, dreaded.
 Yede, go.
 Yfere, together.
 Yode, traveled.
 Yond, mad.
 Ymp, ympe, child.
 Yrkesome, weary.
 Yts, it is.







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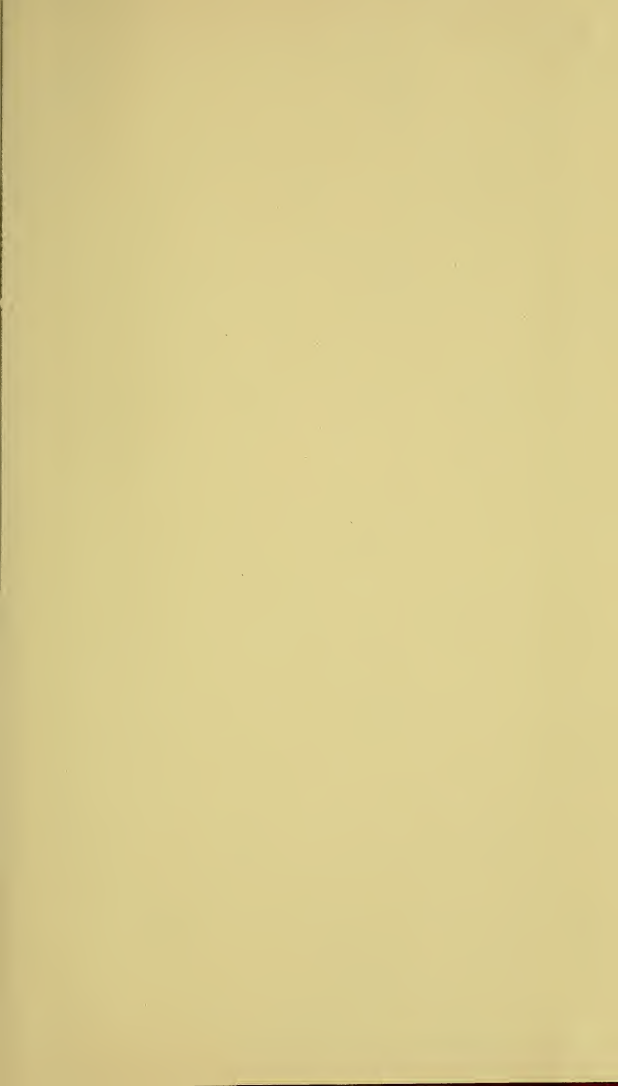
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